BUSINESS / B3-1
Even rich people needing cash run to pawnshops

INFOTECH / B2-2
Virtual malls: Are Filipino consumers ready for online shopping?

NEWS / A11
Environmentalists protest toxic waste pact with Japan

SPORTS / A30
St. Louis Cardinals take opening game of World Series

Patience runs deep in RP call centers

By Christian V. Esguerra

AN ANGRY AMERICAN phoned in, complaining of a broken "cup holder."

The Filipino call center agent at the other end of the line calmly asked

INTERNET / A14

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Monday, October 23, 2006 ★★ 7 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 217 P18 website: www.inq7.net

2 Mega Pacific owners bag new Comelec deal

By Jerry E. Esplanada

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS HAS AWARDED a P18-million printing contract to a firm owned by two of the eight incorporators of Mega Pacific eSolutions Inc. (MPEI), the company behind the P1.3-billion deal to supply automated counting machines that the Supreme Court voided two years ago.

| MEGA PACIFIC / A11

Leave justices alone, senators tell Palace

Cha-cha remarks not in good taste –Gordon

By TJ Burgonio, and Michael Lim Ubac

SENATORS YESTERDAY asked the Arroyo administration to stop pestering the Supreme Court as Malacañang's allies stepped up their calls for the high tribunal to listen to the "voice of the people" and allow the Constitution to be amended through the people's initiative mode.

The senators said President Macapagal-Arroyo and Speaker Jose de Venecia—the main backers of the signature campaign for Charter change (Cha-cha)—should leave the country's highest court alone as the justices prepared to debate the initiative petition.

The petition is backed by more than six million signatures, some of which—opponents claimed—were those of people long dead or of barangay residents finagled into signing with promises of Christmas "goodies" or outright cash.

"I think they [the President and her allies] should lead by example and not bother the Supreme Court," Sen. Richard Gordon said in an interview.

LEADS A6

HOME SWEET HOME. Joseph Pulgueira smiles from the window of his new house by the sea, which was built with the help of an anonymous Inquirer reader.

Typhoon victim surprised with new house

By Joanna Lee Balun
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LUCAENA CITY—FOR THE PAST WEEKS, he had been a picture of hopelessness and misery.

Now, 15-year-old Joseph Pulgueira has reason to smile.

His house, washed away by Typhoon "Milenyo" on Sept. 27, has been rebuilt.

With the help of an anonymous person who read his story in the Inquirer on Oct. 5, Pulgueira was able to rebuild his home, spending nothing.

"Last Saturday morning, three workers came here and brought materials to work on our house," he said, smiling.

"We asked the workers who sent them, but they said the person did not want to be identified," he said.

The house by the sea at Barangay Bayhay was completed on Sunday.

"We did not transfer right away. We were a bit afraid to go back because of what happened," he told the Inquirer.

Since the typhoon, Pulgueira and his family had been spending nights at the Legaspi Port Elementary School, used as an evacuation center. During the day, they would go back to their village to see they would not miss their classes.

But on Monday, Pulgueira and his family spent their first night in their new 3x5-meter house.

Pulgueira said he knew nothing about

TYPHOON A11

Human costs of N. Korean nuclear blackmail

By Armando Doronila

AFTER MEETING AT THE WEEKend with China's special envoy to North Korea, Tang Jiaxuan, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice cast doubt on reports that North Korean leader Kim Jong-il had told Tang that he planned no further nuclear tests.

Tang met with Kim in Pyongyang last week when Kim was reported to have told Tang that he "regretted" the test of Oct. 9, which sent shock waves around the world and heightened fears of a nuclear arms race in Asia.

Rice told reporters that after her meeting with Tang, who had gone on a mission to Pyongyang to try and persuade Kim to avert a second test, she thought North Korea would "like to see an escalation of tension."

Last week, Rice went on a four-day trip to Asia to bolster support for a United Nations Security Council resolution imposing economic and weapons sanctions on North Korea for conducting the underground test.

Despite big power diplomatic efforts to defuse tensions over the test, her pessimistic report highlights the fact that Kim, the only Stalin-style communist dictator left in the world today, was holding the world hostage with his nuclear bomb.

The reason the Philippines cannot be indifferent to the unpredictable and erratic mood of Kim is that it is in the same region as the Korean Peninsula, the most dangerous flash point for nuclear war today.

Our fate is tied to the whims or foreign policy aims of Kim, which have baffled even his allies, most of all China, which has unsuccessfully tried to curb his nuclear ambitions.

Kim, a man with a funny hairdo, has been internationally condemned as an "irrational madman," a "monster" or an "emotionless menace," running a repres-

ANALYSIS
OPINION A18

MICHELLE Agbarog (left) and Rosie Carpio praise Grameen Bank's micro-lending philosophy in Pampanga.

Grameen spirit alive in Central Luzon

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

APALIT, PAMPANGA—TO MIchelle Agbarog who sells fried day-old chicks as a snack in her neighborhood, Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus and his Grameen Bank (Village bank) are names that she had only heard twice or thrice, and she's hard put recalling the occasions.

But it is his philosophy that has stuck, as real as the P200 she earns at the end of each day.

"One's debt is everybody's debt" was how she came to understand the microcredit program adopted from what Yunus

GRAMEEN A11

FR. Ed Pardito adopts Muhammad Yunus' microcredit program.

GUIMARAS OIL SPILL

Experts split on when to siphon fuel

DOJ suspects Solar hole tied to oil smuggling

By Lelia B. Salaverria
(First of a series)

NO ONE CAN SAY PRECISELY how much remains of the 2.1 million liters of bunker fuel oil the MT Solar I was carrying when it sank in stormy seas on Aug. 11 off Guimaras Island, causing the worst environmental pollution in the nation's history.

Fernando del Mundo
Chief

Estimates range from zero to 80 percent of the cargo that was dumped into the water, says Rebel Cordillera, President Macapagal-Arroyo's adviser for Western Visayas. He oversees the ground operations of a task force set up to deal with the multifaceted problems the oil spill has spawned.

Given the amount of oil that has smeared 184 kilometers of

EXPERTS A13

CLEANUP workers stand behind the oil-smeared fence of a house on the shore of Nueva Valencia, Guimaras.

WEATHER FORECAST

Second **FRONTPAGE**

CHEd memo may doom review centers

By Christian V. Esguerra

A MEMORANDUM BEING DRAFTED BY THE COMMISSION on Higher Education (CHEd) may soon spell the end for nursing review centers implicated in the June licensure examinations leakage.

The eight-page draft of the implementing rules and regulations proposes that review centers should not be involved in "controversies such as those pertaining to unethical and/or deceitful practice leading to degrade the integrity of licensure examinations, acceptable academic practices and realities."

Copies of the draft are being circulated for comment to review center owners and schools, according to Jovencio Mamilong, owner of Edgeworth Nursing Review School in Manila.

Mamilong, calling attention to the phrase "non-involvement in controversies," said: Should the new CHED rules be implemented, they would shield a bizarre blow to R.A. Gapuz, Pen-Lopez and Jimwe review centers, which were at the center of the leakage scandal.

"It will definitely hit them," he told the Inquirer in an interview Saturday.

The National Bureau of Investigation earlier found that reviewers at the three centers had made good use of the leakage to pass the June licensure exams.

Mamilong, who furnished the Inquirer a copy of the draft, said the document was first shown around during a consultation meeting between the CHED and review centers on Oct. 17 and Dec. 18. Another meeting is set on Oct. 25 and 26.

He said review centers had been told that no less than President Macapagal-Arroyo wanted the implementing rules and regulations completed and put to place by next month, in time to have an effect on the ensuing licensure exams in December.

The proposed new rules in essence seek to consider the responsibility of running review centers in schools "with duly recognized courses/programs."

It defines review centers as those "operated and owned by a school with a recognized professional courses/programs adhering to the public need, or to a specific local group for a program of study done in accredited schools and enhance the knowledge or competencies obtained in the formal school setting."

Tie-up or integrate

Review centers existing at the time Executive Order No. 566 was issued, the one which placed them under the CHEd, will be given three years to "tie up or be integrated" with a recognized school, according to the draft.

"In the alternative, they may convert as a school and apply for the courses covered by the review subject to rules and regulations of the CHEd and the Securities and Exchange Commission with respect to the establishment of schools," it said.

The proposal puts a premium on track record, stating a school "must possess credibility and track record in terms of overall reputation and standing in the academic community."

Such a standing, it said, could be gleaned from awards and recognition received, performance in the licensure examinations, international linkages and recognition, and recognized reputation and integrity of school officials.

"Non-involvement in controversies" completes the requirement on track record, according to the proposed document.

Passing rate

Citing discussions during the consultation meetings, Mamilong said a review center would be required to have a passing rate of at least 8 percent and a school rating of at least 80 percent in order to maintain their operations.

A review center under a school will be covered by the 8 percent requirement, he said.

Mamilong said another important issue discussed was requiring a mix of successes for every 100 reviewees.

He said that currently, a review center accepts as many as 10,000 students under one teacher. He said the session made this possible by sitting reviewees in a spacious venue or by using broadcast facilities able to reach enrollees in other parts of the country.

"The situation is really terrible," he said. "The premium, for many review centers, is on profit. I'm happy because the proposed new rules focus on the quality of review centers in all disciplines."

Sue PRC, not us, tutors tell nursing graduates

By Alexis Pape

DON'T SUE US, RADDIE THE PROFESSED, tell Regulation Commission (PRC) instead.

This was the mention yesterday of the lawyer for the University of Santo Tomas (UST) nursing faculty to the dozen of nursing graduates opposed to a review of the controversial June nursing licensure exams that would file charges against those now debating the oath-taking of new nurses.

Lawyer Nic Bernardo said the Alliance of New Nurses (ANN) should instead file charges against officials of the PRC for "bungling" the handling of the controversy.

"Why file charges against us? Why not file charges against the PRC? My clients were not the ones who made the mistakes here," Bernardo told the bosses.

Renato Aquino, head of the ANN, said his group was preparing a string of civil actions suits to lodge against the group that stalled the oath-taking of "court" passers. Aquino said 100% nurses who have the group that stalled the oath-taking "experience the kind of hardship we went through for the last four months."

Aquino identified their targets as three Luis Taelle, president of the University of San Tomas College of Nursing, Liel Brando Sandig, president of the League of Professional Nurses, and Michael Angelo Bravo, president of Binibining ng Bayanihan sponsa Student Nurses.

Last Oct. 18, these three groups sought an injunction from the Court of Appeals that would halt the oath-taking of those who passed the June 2006 nursing board examination. The CA had previously ruled that there should be a "partial retake" of the exam.

But Bernardo stressed that board passers on their side, as well as those who favored a retake, "also experienced a lot of hardships."

"They (Aquino's group) have underestimated that this is not at all directed against anyone. That is for the nursing profession in general," she added.

Bernardo also said that the recent Court of Appeals decision on the case showed that the "mistakes" were made by the PRC.

"The CA decision showed that the PRC went beyond the law by encouraging the grades of those who failed. The CA ruled that the commissioner had the sole discretion to determine the cut-off score of the PRC," she said.

Also, it was the PRC who "forgot there is a period of 15 days before the CA decision becomes final."

"May I remind Ms. Aquino that it was the PRC who had week-end duty would prepare the oath-taking. So who is really at fault here? Many were inconvenienced because of the PRC's actions. And we have been trying to point out that the PRC has been doing things wrong."

In the first place, Bernardo said, the PRC should not have released the results of the last board exams. "PRC has committed one mistake after another starting with the release of the results. They knew there was a leakage so they should have held the results until such a time when the (leakage) issue would have been resolved."

Palace set to welcome new Thailand leader

By Christine O. Avendaño

MALACAÑANG IS SET TO PREvide arrival honors for new Thai Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont who will be in Manila for a few hours.

Surayud's Manila visit is part of his familiarization tour of member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), embarked on more than three weeks after he was named Thai premier on Oct. 1 by the military junta that overthrew the government of former Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

Both the Philippines and Thailand are members of the 10-member Asean. Manila is hosting this year's Asean summit.

President Macapagal-Arroyo will welcome Surayud when he and his party pay a call at Malacañang at 1 p.m. today, where the delegation is expected to go immediately after his plane lands at Villamor Air Base in Pasay City.

The Thai premier will have a one-on-one meeting with Presidential Security Group chief Brig. Gen. Rodolfo Tor, Inquirer sources said.

Tor, who is also the commander of the Presidential Security Group, was among those who welcomed Thaksin when he arrived in Manila on Sept. 5 for the Asean Business Advisory Council meeting.

Surayud's visit is being seen as a way to mend fences between Manila and Bangkok after the Philippines criticized the coup that ousted Thaksin.

Surayud's Manila visit is part of his familiarization tour of member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), embarked on more than three weeks after he was named Thai premier on Oct. 1 by the military junta that overthrew the government of former Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

Both the Philippines and Thailand are members of the 10-member Asean. Manila is hosting this year's Asean summit.

President Macapagal-Arroyo will welcome Surayud when he and his party pay a call at Malacañang at 1 p.m. today, where the delegation is expected to go immediately after his plane lands at Villamor Air Base in Pasay City.

The Thai premier will have a one-on-one meeting with Presidential Security Group chief Brig. Gen. Rodolfo Tor, Inquirer sources said.

Tor, who is also the commander of the Presidential Security Group, was among those who welcomed Thaksin when he arrived in Manila on Sept. 5 for the Asean Business Advisory Council meeting.

Surayud's visit is being seen as a way to mend fences between Manila and Bangkok after the Philippines criticized the coup that ousted Thaksin.

Senate leaders earlier said that Ms. Arroyo had sent a "congratulatory message" to Surayud on Oct. 3, in effect signaling that Manila was giving its stamp of approval to the Bloodless Thai coup last month and its aftermath.

At today's meeting, Bunye said, the President is expected to convey to Surayud the desire of many countries that Thailand move quickly to restore "political normalcy."

Earlier, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said he decided it was only "normal" for Ms Arroyo as the head of state to welcome a new leader, more so today now that the Chief Executive has been designated chair of the Asean this year.

"It doesn't follow though that we agree with them and [make] gaps in changing their leaders but we still have to respect their succession processes," Ermita had also said. President Arroyo had regarded ousted leader Thaksin as an ally.

Prior to his Manila visit, Surayud, a former Thai military officer and privy councilor to Thailand's King Bhumibol Adulyadej, visited Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos and Malaysia.

GMA off again, this time for China on Oct. 27

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARroyo will be going away again, this time on a five-day trip to China, beginning Oct. 27.

Ms Arroyo, who left last month for a nine-day trip to Europe and the Americas, will visit Xiamen, Jiangsu, Shandong, Guilin and Nanning in the People's Republic of China.

The President will hold meetings with provincial Chinese business leaders in Xiamen, the Filipino community in Guilin province and university students in Nanchang.

Her last stop at Nanning will be the venue of the commemorative summit to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Asean-China partnership, which will be attended by leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

In Nanning, she is expected to hold bilateral talks with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao as well as members "both formal and pull-aside" talks with other Asean heads of state.

She will also attend the opening ceremony of the 3rd China-Asean Expo.

"The President will not only be representing the Philippines but will also be speaking as chair of Asean, which undoubtedly has helped China become an economic powerhouse as a result of the economic, political and cultural collaboration between Asean and China," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said yesterday.

The Philippines will host the 12th Asean summit in Cebu in December.

Bunye quoted the President as telling Chinese reporters who called on her last week that "China has surged onto the world stage and Asean has surged with it."

"The change has been profound and it is very welcome for the deepening of ties through the Asean-China Free Trade Agreements. This agreement will be built on respect, reciprocity and pragmatism. It will help all of our economies grow and strengthen peace and security in the region," he quoted Ms Arroyo as saying in his View from the Palace column.

Christine O. Avendaño

Over 500 'shocks' followed Friday's quake

By Blanche S. Rivera

SOME 500 AFTERshocks have hit the province following the 5.2-magnitude earthquake on Friday, but most could not be felt by humans and were not strong enough to cause any damage or casualties, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said Sunday.

The moderate earthquake late Friday was centered 20 kilometers off Boac town between the islands of Mindoro and Marinduque, and was felt in nothing provinces as well as in Metro Manila, Phivolcs said.

The quake was followed by at least 500 aftershocks which started at 10:24 p.m. on Friday to 7:28 a.m. yesterday. But only six were felt by people in southern Luzon and some parts of Metro Manila, Phivolcs said.

No tsunamis

The earthquake, which was not strong enough to prompt a tsunami warning, and its aftershocks were set off by a movement of the Lubang fault, one of the country's most active, according to Renato Solidum, Phivolcs director.

Solidum said the country could expect more aftershocks in the coming weeks, but many of these would not be felt.

"This is normal ... The initial shocks last for a few more weeks," he said.

The Phivolcs seismograph records an average 20 earthquakes daily, mostly undetected and considered "insignificant events."

The strongest aftershocks were recorded at 5:09 a.m. on that day and 2:27 a.m. yesterday, both with magnitudes of 4.7. The 3:27 a.m. quake was felt at intensity 3 in Quezon City and Tagaytay City.

19 km deep

Another aftershock with a magnitude of 3.7 was recorded at 2:23 a.m. yesterday and was felt at intensity 3 in Puerto Galera in Oriental Mindoro, Talisay and Lipa in Batangas, Lucban in Quezon and Tagaytay in Metro Manila.

But the quake, which occurred at a depth of 19 kilometers, was recorded by the US Geological Survey with a magnitude of 5.7.

"These aftershocks were located near the epicenter of the 5:01:20:30:30 p.m. earthquake," Phivolcs said in its bulletin.

These aftershocks were initially felt following the strongest quake with the first recorded at 1:27 a.m. on Friday with a magnitude of 3.7, and at 10:54 a.m. and 11:48 a.m. earthquakes with magnitudes 4.6 and 3.8, respectively.

"The Lubang Fault is a small fault but the pieces move frequently," Solidum said in a phone interview yesterday. With reports from Marlon Alexander Lanuza, Inquirer Southern Luzon, AP and AFP

Binay hits Ermita over remarks; Echeverri cleared

By Tarra V. Quismundo and Norman Bordadora

SECURE IN HIS POST AFTER A COURT RULING, Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay yesterday lashed out at Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita for justifying Malacañang's suspension order against him and 19 other local officials last week.

Binay, president of the United Opposition (UNO), said the charge he was maintaining "phantom employees" had no basis.

He said the case was like "arresting someone of theft without saying what was stolen" as the complaint, filed by political rival Rebecca Bellena, did not identify who the alleged ghost employees were.

"You were not right. Sir, Executive Secretary, you should stop saying that you were right in suspending me when the fact is you acted even without proof of [the case] being submitted and reviewed," said Binay in a statement yesterday.

Ermita had said he "cannot see what big mistake" the Office of the President committed when it ordered the suspension of Binay, Vice Mayor Jejomar Binay Jr. and the city's 16 councilors on Tuesday pending investigation of the administrative complaint lodged against them.

Only a temporary restraining order (TRO) issued by the Court of Appeals on Thursday delayed the session at the Makati City Hall, which Binay had refused to vacate.

Binay and his companion clearly constituted "political harassment" and sure the Perez, don't hand behind it. Comes, however, said the action against Binay was just part of duly and legal procedure.

Binay once again scored the complaint that caused his three-day suspension, saying Bellena had been convicted of committing libel against him.

"How, they have a potentially embarrassing situation should be left to produce evidence," said the lawyer.

After yesterday, the Supreme learned that the legal services of the Department of Interior and Local Government had recommended the exoneration from administrative liability of Cebuano City Mayor Rosario Echevarri, charged with grave abuse of authority for the cancellation of a parking contract with Jadewell Parking Systems Inc.

Highly placed sources at the DILG said the recommendation of the legal service was on the desk of Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno for his signature and transmittal to Malacañang.

Reached in Cagayan de Oro City, where he was attending an anniversary event, Puno said: "I cannot anticipate the findings of the report [but] will be submitted to Malacañang."

However, he said that the administrative charge against Echevarri was the only one still pending in connection with the mayor's actions against Jadewell.

For this priest, sex 'a good thing,' Church made it 'bad'

By Vincent Cabreza
Regular Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—THESE ARE A HANDFUL OF Catholic priests in the Philippines who will tell you sex is a "good thing." A few will even admit it's the Church's fault for making sex "a bad thing."

Bachelor and pastor but not one of those outspoken priests last week during a training retreat sponsored by the Institute of Women's Studies that was devoted to gender sensitivity.

Some of the participants appeared surprised to hear a priest reveal how the Church had propagated sexism in Philippine society.

Fr. Percy Jose Bacani, a moral theologian and superintendent of high schools operated by the Diocese of Baguio, said the Catholic doctrine on "guilt" had very much eroded Filipinos' appreciation for and true enjoyment of sex.

The Church, he said, is a male-dominated power structure where the female plays a far subordinate role. It is this ideological foundation which explains why Filipino women today are less valued than women of an ancient Filipino culture where they were revered.

Women who shine in Catholic societies only achieve their ambition by imbibing the male culture, or by sustaining the myth "that the only good woman is an virgin," Bacani said.

President 'man-like'

President Macapagal-Arroyo, he said, is more "man-like" in her stewardship of politics.

Many were surprised when the priest suggested that the deviated view back on the spiritual nature of indigenous Filipino worship in order to embrace the Christian dogma that has made some religious Filipinos effete sex.

Sexism continues his audience that his interest about religion and sex were based on "my struggles to be a man in the right way."

It is an ongoing struggle, he later told the Inquirer.

Bacani, 40, is one of the outspoken members of the "Missionaries for Jesus," a group of Filipino priests who broke away from the Society of Jesus, citing "priest-plod" issues.

He said only 10 to 15 priests in the country had been advocating gender rights aggressively since 2004 when an scandals implicating priests surfaced.

Evaluation of sex concepts

Bacani said sex scandals fueled a campaign among young priests to evaluate Church-dictated concepts of sexuality, but the lukewarm discouraged them.

Society's strong reaction to these scandals some say, he said, he said, citing a local priest who was convicted by a Baguio court of sexual misconduct but who still won the mayoral race in a Benguet town.

Bacani said he had been asking Baguio Bishop Carlito Cenzon to allow him to counsel local priests about sexuality, using his radical models, but has yet to receive a response.

"I taught some priests about gender rights, and I spoke about it to my homies in seminary, but some semi-conservative priests said that these discussions would take," Bacani said.

A junior challenged some of Bacani's moral message by stressing that the society progressed better under the Church compared to the period when Filipinos wrested a successful leadership.

Subverting age-old principles

Raymundo Arellano, a history professor in the University of the Philippines-Baguio, described Bacani's advocacy as "a hard push" and said he was subverting centuries-old principles.

Bacani said being tolerant of all sexual preferences meant accepting homosexuality.

He said that while the Church acknowledged homosexual orientation, it frowned on homosexual acts. He said this view was deceptive.

Modern Christianity, he said, had fashioned its concepts about life, society, women and powers around the principle of a society run by males.

Historically, Bacani said, the Church's ideological foundation is defined by the gender of Jesus Christ, who is male.

The Church's language reveals this bias, he said, because God is always "The Father," and the Church's notion of males is composed mainly of men.

Patriarchal conceit

Sexuality also follows a patriarchal conceit, Bacani said.

"The male orientation is to penetrate.

Masculinities and femininities are taboo because these sexual acts do not produce children," he said.

Virginity is a doctrine that has no real value in society, but it persists under Church teachings, the priest said.

Bacani said that local models, very Filipino at most who are aroused by a naked woman, find sin, he said, takes place when a man chooses and objectifies the woman.

FR. PERCY BACANI illustrates the discourse on sexuality, which he believes is formed by the teachings of the Church.

He said his lessons were not artistic on Christianity, but were discussion points for the faithful "because we need to revisit our religion ... we need to review our faith."

The Episcopal Church is closer to understanding the gender schism it allows homosexuals and women to become part of its clergy, Bacani said.

Cordillera more advanced

He said indigenous Filipino concepts in the Cordillera taught the faithful about sex far better than Christian books could because Cordillera society allowed women a say in communal decisions and were not afraid of nudity.

Arellano said Cordillera women had a far healthier concept of sex.

"They do not have a word for 'rape' or 'harassment' because the concept has gaps. But rape and incest rare occur in the modern Cordillera world, and that is tragic," he said.

Correction

IN THE OCT. 22 ISSUE, a story on Page A3—"3 shantytowns felt after 5.2-quake jolts Manila"—misstated the location of San Pablo City. San Pablo City is in Laguna—not Batangas.

Readers may send their requests for corrections of factual errors or omissions to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PIU Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Makati cor Ave., Makati City, Tel. 896-6001 to 19, 897-01-54, e-mail address: dayde@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Letitia Kalaw Diaz, Inquirer ombudsman, e-mail address: ombudsman@inquirer.com.ph or fax No. 897-47-03 loc. 816, Manila. Advisory: Art photo number is 867-0000 local 510.

The Daily Gospel

Monday, October 23, 2006
29th Week in Ordinary Time
John Capistrano

1st Reading: Eph 2:1-10
Gospel: Luke 12:13-21

Someone in the crowd spoke to Jesus, "Master, tell my brother to share with me the family inheritance." He replied, "My friend, who has appointed me as your judge or your referee?" Then Jesus said to his people, "Be on your guard and avoid every kind of greed, for even though you have many possessions, it is not that which gives you life."

And Jesus continued with this story. "There was a rich man and his land had produced a good harvest. He thought, 'What should I do? For I am short of room to store my harvest.' So this is what I will do. I will pull down my barns and build bigger ones to store all the grain, which is my wealth. Then I can say to myself, 'My friend, you have a lot of good things put by for many years. But, no, God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be taken from you; tell me who shall get all you have put aside!' This is the lot of the man who stores up riches instead of standing for God."

Commentary

We were once dead, living evil, living unjustly, selfishly, living under the anger of God. But as sinners have found everybody and we've been brought back to life. Everyone has forgiven and we have a place with Jesus. Always there is the gift offered and we are living much less God's work of art. Jesus is the gospel that's with the details of inheritance, family disputes, greed, selfishness and demands that upon decisions. And Jesus is the answer to the temptation to be rich in the eyes of God. Jesus is the answer. Where do we put our treasures? We are God's treasures—what are we doing with our lives now?

Philippine Publications Inc., Publication No. 129 Sept. Chirman, Quezon City, GP 30 Box 4, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines. Tel. 896-6001 to 19, 897-01-54, e-mail: info@inquirer.com.ph, Website: http://www.inquirer.com.ph. Reproduction by Chirman Publications Inc. (CPI) is prohibited. Use any of its features in any of its Philippines

Call centers no riskier to workers than other jobs, says labor leader

By Leila B. Salaverria and Jerome Aning

A LABOR GROUP HAS DEMYSTIFIED THE health hazards posed by call center work schedules in their employees, saying many other professions also have unnormal work hours and take on insomnia, but measures could be taken to avoid them.

"While there may be some work-related health risks associated with call centers, these are not necessarily limited to the (call center) setting. many occupations tend to expose workers to similar health hazards," said TUCP secretary general Ernesto Herrera.

The TUCP said the health risks from call center schedules which require most employees to work at night, while a concern, could be addressed by the enforcement of measures to prevent illness and via the provision of proper health care.

"This is not to say the health risks in call centers are not an issue. They are a concern. In the same manner health issues in other occupations are a concern," Herrera said in a statement.

Herrera cited as an example airline crews who tend to develop health issues related mostly to their erratic irregular arrival and departure times and from standing up for long periods of time, especially during long-haul flights.

He said nurses and other hospital workers were also at risk, being exposed and vulnerable to infectious diseases.

Even seamen are extremely vulnerable to depression, Herrera said, but many Filipinos still want to join the profession because of the high compensation.

Jun Jin, the Department of Labor and Employment's Occupational Safety and Health Center warned that personnel of the booming call center industry risk suffering from anxiety, stress, musculoskeletal disorder and eye problems, aside from hearing problems.

These are caused by unnecessary telephone and computer use, long hours of sitting, a cold and noisy workplace, and the need to meet quotas.

Medical experts have also warned that call center employees run the risk of contracting ulcers, obesity, stress leading to depression, smoker troubles, insomnia, hormonal imbalance, loss of concentration and eye fatigue.

According to Herrera, industries that pose health risks should provide proper health care for their workers.

"This is an problem on the need for employers and staff in all job settings to purposely take adequate preventive measures in order to lessen the risks, and to make sure disorders are promptly diagnosed and treated," he said.

He also noted that call center workers generally enjoyed good health care benefits, enjoyed their competitive pay.

Employees entitled to pay on Eid'l Fitr

WORKERS WILL BE ENTITLED TO COMPENsation on Oct. 25, a regular holiday in observance of the Muslim feast of Eid'l Fitr, regardless of whether they report for work or not, according to the Department of Labor and Employment.

The DOLE released the guidelines for the compensation of employees during the holiday and Labor Secretary Arturo Brion reminded employers they have to follow them.

Based on the guidelines, an employee will receive his regular compensation even if he does not report for work on that day, and even if the day is his rest day.

If the day is a regular workday and the employee reports for duty, he is entitled to 200 percent of his regular wage. If he works over eight hours, he should receive the hourly rate for that day which is 200 percent of his regular wage divided by eight, plus 30 percent of that hourly rate.

But if the holiday falls on the worker's rest day and he still reports for duty, he should receive 260 percent of his regular wage. For over-time work, he should get the hourly rate, which is 260 percent of his regular wage divided by eight, plus 30 percent of that rate.

President Macapagal-Arroyo declared Tuesday a holiday throughout the country in observance of Eid'l Fitr, which is celebrated by the Muslim world at the end of the fasting month of Ramadan.

Eid'l Fitr was declared a regular holiday to promote cultural understanding and integration, and to give the Filipino nation a chance to join Muslims in the celebration, she said.

Leila B. Salaverria

SAN BEDA COLLEGE (Mendiola)
Graduate School of Law

The Graduate School of Law announces that enrollment for the Second Semester of Academic Year 2006 - 2007 has commenced. Students may apply for admission to the degree programs leading to MASTER OF LAWS (LL.M.), MASTER OF SCIENCE IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE ADMINISTRATION and DOCTOR IN THE SCIENCE OF JURISPRUDENCE (S.J.D.).

Classes are held only once a month on a Saturday because we employ a delivery system that combines classroom work with research and mentorship.

Please contact Ilse Gelmar Cruz at [illegible] Loc. 3113 or 09164833438. You may also contact Ms. Alkay Huang at 09209081422. Lectures by Syd Reder's professors are held in Davao City as well. Please contact Prof. Ed Belicena at [illegible] and at Cebu City at the University of San Carlos. Please contact the Dean at the College of Law, University of San Carlos.

Leave justices alone, senators tell Palace

From page A1

He was referring to Mr Arroyo's remarks on Thursday in favor of Charter change before an international conference of jurists, including Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban. Senator Jose de Venecia lauds the same plan but in more unguaranteed terms before the same body the following day.

"It's not in good taste," Cordoz said, adding that De Venecia's call for the justices to change history by approving the people's initiative was contemptuous of and disrespectful to the court.

Palace strategem

Panganiban told reporters last week that the Supreme Court, which is going on a 30-day recess from Oct. 30, will start to deliberate on the initiatives this week.

The amendments being proposed under the people's initiative mode would strike down the country's presidential form of government and set up a parliamentary government with Ms Arroyo still at the helm.

Cha-cha opponents said this was a Malacañang strategem to ensure the former's political survival at least until 2010 and allow her to bury for good the so-called "Hello Garci" tape scandal centered on allegations that she cheated her way to victory in the 2004 elections – a charge she denies.

A top presidential defender, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, believes the Supreme Court should give more weight to the people's votes than to the lack of an enabling law to implement the initiative mode.

'People are sovereign'

"Certainly, the people's voice is the higher authority," Gonzalez said in a phone interview. "The people are always sovereign. The issue of an enabling law is secondary here."

Gonzalez said: "The Supreme Court is a creature of the Constitution, which is a creature of the people. Everything depends on the people."

Presidential allies in the House of Representatives were not too far behind.

"The issues are too serious, too grave and too important to be decided on technicalities," said House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles.

Nograles pointed out that even critics and those in the political opposition were agreed on the need for Charter change and differed only on the way of doing it.

Rep. Douglas Cagas of Davao del Sur said: "We urge our justices to acknowledge the overwhelming stance for PI (people's initiative)."

Cagas, however, added that he believed in the justices' sense of integrity and in "their ability to weather any pressure."

Rep. Juan Edgardo Angara said the high court should resolve ambiguities in the law "in favor of the people's right to propose amendments once it is a right given to the people by the Constitution."

Mr Arroyo's political adviser, Gabriel Claudio, said yesterday there was "enough basis for optimism" that the high court would rule in favor of the people's initiative.

"It's too difficult and painful to contemplate a scenario of a failed people's initiative," Claudio said in a phone interview.

"This is beyond partisan politics," he added.

Claudio said as much was at stake in the campaign to change the Charter, including the country's future and "prospects of institutionalizing the vehicle for economic and political reforms."

Political lobbying

Gordon, who thinks the committee on constitutional amendments, and statewide administration Sen. Jinkee Arroyo said that De Venecia's appeal to the Supreme Court justices to allow himself to be approved the people's initiative smacked of "desperation."

"That's political lobbying. It does not give due respect to the Supreme Court ... You don't go to the Supreme Court and tell it to approve the initiative. It's a contemptuous conduct on the as Pro-concerned," Gordon said.

Senator Arroyo agreed.

"That Speaker De Venecia should publicly and unabashedly urge the Supreme Court without any qualms to decide the initiative case favorably to the proponents is simply to later a gathering of international jurists [is] an act of desperation," Arroyo said.

The President and De Venecia aired their views on Cha-cha a few days after Chief Justice Panganiban admitted that the court was getting some pressure from interested parties in the people's initiative case. Ms Arroyo said amending the Charter was a step toward building a modern Philippines.

Sen. Edgardo Angara, a Charter change advocate, echoed a colleague's prediction that the Supreme Court vote on the initiative would be a close one, but stressed that the argument against it do outweighed the arguments for it.

Angara said that the arguments that the initiative petition was not backed by an enabling law and would in effect murder the Constitution far outweighed the claim that it was supported by millions of signatures.

Sen. Manuel Villar Jr. and retired constitutionalist Joaquin Bernas S. voiced confidence that the justices would see through the initiative's intent, which he claimed was to abolish a retired Senate that has played a part in the system of checks and balances.

Senator Arroyo earlier predicted that the high court's vote would be split, either 8-7 or 9-6, but there was no telling where it would go.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. predicted that the confusion of the issue would drag on and leave little time for the conduct of a plebiscite which the administration hopes to hold on Jan. 15.

Commenting on Ms Arroyo's statements leaning Cha-cha, Pimentel said: "The people should refute them as not a matter who can interpret on her own words dictate. She is supposed to be the head of a democratic government that rules only according to the people's will." With reports from Christine O. Avendaño and Lila B. Salamatin

Not skipping social functions

By Carmela Reyes
Inquirer Central Luzon

CITY OF MALOLOS—DESPITE JUSTICE Secretary Raul Gonzalez's advice for him to steer clear of social functions, Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban on Sunday graced the 80th birthday celebration of a friend here.

Panganiban, accompanied by his wife, went to the Bulacan State University hotel at a special guest of retired Court of Appeals Associate Justice Jose de la Rama, founder and dean of the Malolos-de la Rama Colleges of Law in 1952.

Panganiban gave his excuse for coming.

"This occasion is important to our friends, especially to someone like our former CA Justice De la Rama, that's why we are here today," Panganiban, speaking in Pilipino, told a crowd composed mainly of lawyers and judges.

Panganiban declined to comment on Gonzalez's statement that he should stop attending social functions to avoid the "pressure" being exerted on him over the people's initiative issue pending in the Supreme Court.

Panganiban arrived after 10 a.m., ate at the main table reserved for special guests, had lunch and left at about 1 p.m.

PEOPLE HANDLING SKILLS SEMINAR

December 5-7, 2006 • Mandarin Oriental Hotel

There are seniors and there are elsewhere. Some leaders are hyper-achievers and really enhance the energy of their people. Some leaders give inspiration but lack action and don't necessarily set good examples. Just think about this: how your managers and supervisors lead their people greatly affect your business growth. It's about time you shaped your leaders into masters in handling their people. Equip them with superb leadership skills that will truly make their people get inspired and get involved. Let your leaders go further, so will make your business grow bigger.

After the seminar, the participants will be able to: Deliver results that substantially contribute to the company's plans • Focus their people's efforts toward achieving the organization's goals • Look for and develop the best in their people • Build a better work relationship with their boss, peers and people • Conduct more productive meetings • Exercise power, authority and credibility welcomed by their team • Gain decision-making skills that firmly establish their leadership position • Find out what makes delegation effective and successful • Align their people's efforts through effective coaching and counseling

Guthrie Jensen
CONSULTANTS TO MANAGEMENT
SHARPER SKILLS FASTER RESULTS

For inquiries and reservations, call Avis, Diane, Caroline, LJ or Trixie at 894-5449, 892-7543 or 856-1617 or log on to www.guthrie-jensen.com

7/F Glass Tower Bldg., Carlos Palanca Jr. St., Legaspi Village, Makati City

20 COMDDAP

COMDDAP MANILA
OCTOBER 08 TO 20, 2006

WALKING THEIR TALK
Thousands participate in the Walk Against Breast Cancer that was held yesterday at the SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City to raise awareness of the disease that continues to claim more victims. (See related story in Metro, Page A24)

From the nation's No. 1 Newspaper:
INQUIRER
Read it every Sunday with the Philippine Daily Inquirer.
JOB Market

Kancura
HERBAL TEA
100% Slimming Power

Expert warns AIDS on rise

DUMAGUETE CITY—The steady increase in new cases of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome infections in the country could usher in a second wave of the disease in the Philippines and in Asia, an expert on HIV/AIDS warned.

Marlyn Rio-Malapang, executive director of the Quezon City-based Health and Development Institute, said new cases of HIV/AIDS surged by 150 percent to 199 cases this year.

"There is a low level of awareness about the ways of preventing and the ways of transmission, because to many people, AIDS is not an issue," she said, speaking on Sunday at a forum organized by the Silliman University Clinic.

HIV is spread when blood, semen or vaginal fluids from an infected person enter another person's body usually through sexual contact, blood transfusion or from sharing needles when injecting drugs.

Department of Health figures indicate that as of December 2005, there were 11,168 cases of HIV and AIDS in the Philippines. Of this number, 86 percent were transmitted sexually, she said. Pia Lester Vinzon

MIYATA
Gasoline Engine and Engine Pump
For dealership inquiries call: 929-93-08
Look for Mr. Joel Panagsagan
Distributed by
SUPER TRADE ENTERPRISES

HI-PRECISION diagnostics
THE 1st OF ITS KIND!
Dual ISO Certified
Quality Guaranteed!
onlineResults
www.hi-precision.com.ph
Mobile No. 0920-8010682
HOME & MOBILE SERVICE AVAILABLE!

Completely waterproofed.
Flintkote No.3
Shell Flintkote, formerly Weathershield, is all you ever need to protect all kinds of surfaces from water and corrosive damage. Shell Flintkote is the complete waterproofing system specifically designed to protect roofs, walls and floors of homes and buildings from moisture.
Shell Flintkote. The complete waterproofing system.
For inquiries, call 870-8888 or 1-800-10000-1101 (toll free)
or email SCIP feedback and concern@shell.com
website: www.shell.com.ph

Add more joy to your chickenjoy Megga-deliver na ng
MUSHROOM RICE and MASHED POTATO
Dial 8-7000
Jollibee Delivery
30 MINUTES OR LESS GUARANTEED

PREMYO SA RES'BO

PAGCOR

October Draw Milyonaryo

Fe Lopez of Gen. Trias Cavite

TEXT 9777

9778

"Tamang-tama birthday kol"

Text mass Premyo Sa Resbo draw ad ran on November 3, 2006, where another five P1 million and ten P100,000 consolation prizes are at stake. For this draw, Official Receipts from Sept. 1 to Nov. 2, 2006 are qualified.

Get a chance to win P1 million daily!

Watch "Wowowee Premyo sa Resbo" on ABC 5 at 11pm

powered by:

philweb

Barangays tapped in fight vs terror

By Blanche S. Rivera

NOTING TERRORISM HAS ASSUMED A LOCAL character, the national government is tapping local governments, particularly the country's 41,000 barangays, to lead in the fight against terrorism alongside the police and military.

Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno said peace and order councils closest to the barangay level would be mobilized to help in the government's counterterrorism campaign by keeping an updated list of their communities' inhabitants and reporting anything suspicious.

"Terrorism has assumed a local character. We should all get involved in keeping our country safe from this global security threat," Puno said in a memo format with local government executives of Mindanao.

The Department of Interior and Local Government said 37,334 of the country's 41,972 barangays had already created their own barangay peace and order committees (BPOC) as of the weekend.

Unified plan

He urged Mindanao, which has long been suffering from the rebel secessionist movement and the current insurgency, to develop a unified plan to fight terrorism on the island.

Puno said that with terrorists becoming bolder in staging attacks in Mindanao, "governors and mayors of the island should now lead the fight against terrorism by becoming actively involved in ongoing efforts to eradicate the communities against this global scourge."

Three explosions that police blamed on the Southeast Asian regional terrorist network Jemaah Islamiyah and the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front rocked Mindanao two weeks ago, killing six people and injuring two dozen in Cotabato City.

Mindanao has a total of 18,942 barangays, with 1,903 in the Zamboanga peninsula, 2,039 in Northern Mindanao, 1,258 in Davao, 1,194 in the Soccsargen region, 1,308 in the Caraga region and 2,459 in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Force multipliers

Puno said Mindanao's local government officials could tap their barangay "tanod" (watchmen) to be members of civilian volunteer organizations (CVO), groups of civilians that would be trained and deployed by the Philippine National Police as "force multipliers" in the campaign to wipe out the threats to security.

He said Executive Order No. 546, which makes the PNP a co-equal partner with the Armed Forces of the Philippines in the antiinsurgency campaign, also authorizes the use of barangay funds or a part of the internal revenue allotments to strengthen the government's fight against terrorism and other security threats.

Prevention

"We can fight terrorism not only by enforcing the operational and logistical capability of our police and military but also by preventing its occurrence through simple information-gathering and monitoring," the DILG chief said.

Puno, who also chairs the National Police Commission, also urged the local governments to include in their annual budgets funds for the operational and logistical support of police units and CVOs.

He said the DPOCs would help forge closer partnerships among the police, military and the local communities.

Intensify hunt for engineers' abductors, PNP chief orders

By Alexis Pope

PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE DIRECTOR General Oscar Calderon yesterday ordered police tracking down the abductors of four people working on a disputed Swiss-funded project in Pikit, Cotabato, to leave "no stone unturned" in their hunt.

The four, three engineers and their driver, were kidnapped last Sunday but managed to escape on Friday.

Calderon gave the order to Chief Supt. Joel Tobias, Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) police head. The engineers were Romeo Rivera, Reynaldo Roble and Larry Ramirez, and their driver was Rosemarie Lapus.

Tobias had earlier identified the alleged abductors as Aklan Inkarl, Bong Inkarlul and a certain Asan. He said the appropriate charges would be filed against them in court.

Abu Sayyaf faction

The police and military believe the suspects are members of an Abu Sayyaf faction headed by Ireng Sahiron, the main suspect in the killing of former Interior Secretary Jesus Dureza's son Jesus Jr.

The victims are now back in Manila but promised to return to Pikit to continue working on their project.

"It is unfortunate that this happened. But the good part is that the victims are safe," Calderon said in a statement to the media.

The four were kidnapped by their own bodyguards for still unknown reasons. They managed to escape as their captors slept.

Troops tracking the kidnappers spotted the four victims walking in a village near the boundaries of Pikit and Aleosan towns, according to Col. Reynaldo Sentuna, commander of an army brigade on Jolo island.

High-profile kidnappings

The victims, according to reports, were held somewhere in Barangay Mihaan, a village located between Aleosan and Pikit.

The Abu Sayyaf Group has been involved in past high-profile kidnappings, including the 2000 Dos Palmas abduction of tourists, mostly foreigners and Americans, that ended in the deaths of some of the hostages.

The military is currently conducting operations against Abu Sayyaf leader Khadaffy Janjalani in Sulu. Janjalani is said to be aiding two Indonesian Jemaah Islamiyah leaders, Dulmatin and Umar Patek, wanted for the 2002 Bali bombings that killed more than 200 people, mostly Australian tourists.

EAGLE ELECTRIC

Save Lives Use Eagle

Low quality & fake electrical devices are dangerous for you & your neighbours. Be a responsible citizen. Ensure safety with Eagle Electric.

Ceiling & Surface Receptacles, Outlets/Plugs

Manufactured and marketed by: COMMANDO ELECTRIC CO., INC.

WARNING: BEWARE OF IMITATIONS!

COUNTERFEITING IS RAMPANT

King, Castellano, Tan & Associates

Marine, Scout Ranger 'plotters' fate known Tuesday, says Esperon

Lowest Price Guaranteed or Your Money Back
Buy computers online:
ALL NEW!
Intel Pentium 4 2.93
P 19,999.00 w/ 17" LCD
(02) 410 - QUBE (7823)
www.buyqube.com
Manila Cebu Davao
0922-4106849 to 50

Where you find the best.
JOR

By Alexis Pepa and Dona Z. Pazzibugan

THE MILITARY IS SET TO RELEASE ON TUESday the results of its investigation into the involvement of 28 officers from the Marines and Scout Rangers in the aborted Feb. 24 coup plot, Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon said yesterday.

The results of the probe will determine if the accused officers led by former Marine commandant Maj. Gen. Renato Miranda, Marine Col. Ariel Querubin and former Scout Ranger chief Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim will undergo court-martial.

If the Judge Advocate General's Office (JAGO) finds enough evidence against the officers, they will be tried for violations of the Articles of War.

Esperon said the results would have come out earlier but were "delayed" because the JAGO wanted to give the accused officers enough time to answer charges they lackplanned to withdraw support from President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Weekend review

"Our Judge Advocate General's Office was supposed to come out with the results before the previous week ended. But they had to review it over the weekend...So we expect it to come out by Tuesday," he said.

Esperon promised he would make the final decision on whether or not to recommend a general court-martial against the officers.

"The final approval will be from me. Upon receipt of the report ... (then I will), we will form the general court-martial," he said.

Asked if he would convene the Board should it recommend that the officers not be tried, Esperon said: "Cross, I cross, I sure."

In the past, Esperon had said that regardless of the results of the JAGO probe, he would order the convening of a general court-martial to try the officers, saying that as far as he was concerned, there was enough evidence against the officers.

Overwhelming evidence

On Oct. 16, Esperon gave broad hints that he would overrule any recommendation to absolve the accused officers.

"It looks like that. There's overwhelming evidence, unless I'm disproved," he said.

A total of 25 Scout Ranger officers led by Lim and 13 Marine officers led by Miranda and Querubin were implicated in the alleged coup plot.

A military fact-finding panel earlier said Lim and Querubin, with Miranda's knowledge, planned to lead a mass withdrawal of support from President Macapagal-Arroyo during the 20th anniversary celebration of the 1986 People Power revolt on Feb. 24.

Esperon recently said Lim's videotaped declaration of withdrawal of support, which surfaced, was "inconvertible" evidence against him.

Meanwhile, a group of retired senior military officers claimed the threat of a "bloody conflict" within the military has not died down. They said the legitimacy of Ms Arroyo's presidency remains in question.

"The warning sound is so strong and so forbidding it is too difficult to ignore," said the statement issued by retired Brig. Gen. Cesar Go, Brig. Gen. Victorio Ribo, Col. Leonardo Odrunia, Col. Guillermo Carascoso and Col. Mariano Santiago.

"They (soldiers) are convinced, as majority of the Filipinos are, that the person who occupies the presidency has no right to that position."

LG
Life's Good
Love an original.
Ultra-chic, ultra-slim, ultra-stylish chocolate mobile phone. A concoction in minimalist black empowered by a hidden touch pad. Nothing comes close to this runaway winner in the 2006 IF Design Awards in Germany.
chocolate
BLACK LABEL SERIES
KG800
Call: (02) 640-2525
www.lge.com
LG Mobile

LOW MORE
HOW IN ONE SQUARE
FACTORY PRICE
DEALERS ACCEPTED
DRAGON FIREWORKS
Food Packaging & Cleaning Products
AAA Apparel
FOR INQUIRIES

LORATADINE
ALLERTA
GAMOT SA ALLERGY, SA PRESYONG 'DI KA ALLERGIC.
SAVE UP TO 50%

Gov't workers breaking uniform law–solon

By Michael Lim Ubac
CONGRESSIONAL CORR.

...cian and employees from the President on down should be wearing uniforms made of indigenous fabrics derived from the abaca, banana and pineapple plants, an administration lawmaker said yesterday.

Rep. Luis Villafuerte of Camarines Sur said that up to now most agencies of the government had not complied with the 2004 law on mandating the use by all public officials and employees of uniforms containing tropical fabrics abundantly available locally.

RA 9242

In Senate Resolution No. 700 filed last week, Villafuerte urged Congress to comply with Republic Act No. 9242, the "Act Prescribing the Use of Philippine Tropical Fabrics for the Uniforms of Public Officials and Employees."

The law covers all executives and personnel in all the branches of government, including government-owned and -controlled corporations, regardless of whether they are elective, appointed, permanent, temporary or casual employees.

Under RA 9242, all officials are to be used for the uniforms of public officials and employees should have natural fibers from the abaca, banana or pineapple plants in them. The fabrics, when mixed with silk or polyester, and after undergoing the Du Pont process of Science and Technology's Philippine Textile Research Institute, should meet the standard requirements of composition and characteristics for uniforms.

'No excuse'

Aides' about the usually out-of-line President Noli de Castro, Speaker Jose de Venecia and Senate President Manuel Villar, the lawmaker said: "There is absolutely no excuse for noncompliance. It is incumbent upon the highest officials of the House of Representatives and of the Senate to lead by example and to promptly see to it that both chambers adhere to the law."

Joining Villafuerte's Armando Aquilino Pichay and Ramon Magsaysay, and House Minority Leader Francis Escudero, are among the congressional leaders who habitually wear a barong Tagalog which is usually made of local fabrics and is considered formal wear.

Villafuerte said orderly following the law on uniforms would create new consumption that would give local farmers more business, drive the growth of our highly labor-intensive textile and garment industry and spur employment.

"This new business can provide a foundation for the sound and orderly development of our tropical fabrics industries, which has the huge potential of creating up to 300,000 new jobs from billions of pesos in fresh investments," Villafuerte said.

"This is also about giving preferential treatment to domestic products over imported or smuggled ready-to-wear clothing or foreign fabrics," he said.

P5B yearly

Villafuerte noted that the government spends over P5 billion yearly for the uniforms of about 2 million state workers.

"This is supposed to enable employees to purchase at least four new uniforms each year. Our head count in national offices is over 1.2 million and in local governments, more than 800,000. This means all agencies combined spend at least P8 billion yearly for the clothing or uniform allowances of their staff," Villafuerte said.

"This is a lot of recurring demand that can propel the modernization of our garments and textile industry as it can contribute even more appreciably to the world market," he said.

300 firms can't pay new wage

DESPITE THE BRIGHT economic picture being painted by the Arroyo administration, at least 300 companies have applied for exemption from having to pay the newly mandated P125 daily minimum wage, claiming "financial distress."

National Wages and Productivity Commission officer in charge, executive director Julius Cainglet, said these were the companies that beat the deadline on Wednesday for the filing of applications for wage exemption.

Cainglet said most of the applicants were small and medium-size companies, engaged in the retail trade, and employing at least 10 people. Many companies said they were seeking relief from inflation brought on by the recent calamities.

"The exemption offers only temporary relief. Even if it is approved, these companies would still be required to give the minimum wage after a year," Cainglet explained.

Also, the claims would still have to be reviewed, she added.

Cainglet said that last year, about 600 companies in Metro Manila applied for exemption, but only 17 percent were granted by the commission.

The Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board in the National Capital Region approved the minimum daily wage in 2000 on July 11. Income during

COPIERS Rent • Lease • Sale
Canon • Konica • Minolta • Sharp
Also Available: LIQUID COPIERS
COPYTRADE.
Special Promo Package
BAGUIO BAGUIO
BAGUIO TRAVEL & TOURS
Singapore $186
Bangkok $204 Bangkok $129
Mauelion World Travel, Inc.
AIRFARES : EXCITING PACKAGES
SALE! HURRY!
$76
$96
"International Championship Fun Package" – Per de Luxe air
BMD TRAVEL & TOURS
MEGA SAVER'S PACKAGE
INTERNATIONAL LEISURE PACKAGES
Seven Seas Travel and Tours
Royal Tours
Royal Vacation Holiday Travel & Tours
Think Winlink.
WINLINK TRAVEL
SKYNET TRAVEL
HONEY HOLIDAYS
Hong Kong Tour
Singapore Packages
China Panorama
RAMADA
PANDA TRAVEL SERVICE INC.
BAKEO
PTAA

Environmentalists protest waste pact with Japan

By Blanche S. Rivera

ENVIRONMENTAL... are running a hotline over the recently signed Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA), saying this would allow the dumping of highly toxic and hazardous wastes in the country.

The Ecowaste Coalition, a network of 50 organizations, said the waste exemption specified in the agreement to the dialed nonrecyclable items such as incinerator ash, residues containing arsenic and mercury, sewage sludge, clinical waste like used surgical gloves and shoes, and municipal waste like sanitary napkins and diapers.

Zero tariff

JPEPA, a bilateral trade and investment treaty signed by President Macapagal-Arroyo and former Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi on Sept. 9, mandates zero-tariff for "recyclable materials" from Japan.

Trade in hazardous waste is usually not part of trade agreements and are banned by international conventions, Ecowaste charged.

"We fear that the JPEPA will only legitimize the dumping of toxic waste materials in the guise of recycling," Ecowaste secretary Manny Calonzo said in a statement today.

He said the country did not even have the technology to recycle or properly treat and dispose of hazardous materials produced here.

Japan, a highly developed country with advanced recycling technology, has a recycling efficiency of only 9.9 percent, according to Health Care Without Harm, another environment-protection advocacy group.

"Experience shows that the Philippines, like most developing countries, lacks efficient hazardous waste disposal facilities," Calonzo said.

'Waste scandal'

Environmentalists fear JPEPA provisions on the trade of hazardous wastes would trigger a repeat of the 1999 "waste scandal" in which 2,700 tons of hazardous waste found their way to the Philippines from Japan.

The shipment was supposedly "waste paper for recycling," but inspection by the Bureau of Customs revealed that about 80 percent of the contents of the 121 containers were unrecyclable and clinical waste.

The expense caused by the shipment escalated to the waste being shipped back to Japan.

"JPEPA, no doubt, will only exacerbate our struggle against the increasingly rotten and toxicity of our country's waste," Ecowaste said.

Good Location, Good View
BAGUIO VACATION HOUSE
Brand New
P1,500/day 2BR 1 Bath
P1,200/day 1BR 1 Bath
Tuna Resto - cooking demos & seminars
Condo for Lease - 1 Bedroom
Bamboo Room - Function Room
Tuna Condo Villa Hotel
Call Mobile: 0917-5-TUNA-00 (0917-588-6200)
Email: tunacondo@yahoo.com

COPYSTAR
CLEAR POWDER COPIER
Per unit only P15,000
Inclusive of: 1 unit toner, 1 unit developer, 1 unit drum, 1 unit fuser, 1 unit transfer roller, 1 unit separation roller, 1 unit pick-up roller, 1 unit heat roller, 1 unit pressure roller, 1 unit bushing, 1 unit bearing, 1 unit gear, 1 unit sensor, 1 unit cleaning blade, 1 unit doctor blade, 1 unit magnet roller, 1 unit charge roller, 1 unit charge corona, 1 unit grid, 1 unit cleaning roller, 1 unit developer roller, 1 unit fuser

Experts split on when to siphon fuel

From page A1

the Guimaras coastline, Coscolluela says there's probably only the Solar 1's bed chief's left in the tanker resting 620 meters deep on the sea floor.

He says others believe that only two of the 10 oil containers inside the tanker had opened and that 1.6 to 1.7 million liters of oil remained of the cargo the vessel was ferrying for Iloilo Corp. from its depot in Batangas to Iloilo province where disaster struck.

That's what it appears from the footage taken in late August by a remotely operated vehicle (ROV) sent down by experts on board the Wakati Mars, a shipborne research vessel commissioned by Norway to investigate what happened and what to do next. (See related story on Page A1.)

Holes of oil continue to escape from the tanker's vents—some experts say astounding to 120 liters per day, although others dispute the figure. No one is certain, but the experts agree the steady leak dissipates but indirectly although it remains cause for concern.

"Some people have said, why not lift the vessel and bring it back to shore," says Coscolluela.

"The answer is it would entail too much risk given the observed condition of the hull. It has a hole, a dent, certain cracks. Lifting the vessel could possibly expose it to undue pressure, causing it to break or causing the cracks to enlarge, thereby releasing more oil," he says.

Preferred approach

"So the preferred engineering approach has been—siphon off the oil and worry about recovering the vessel later if it's still worth it," Coscolluela says.

That's exactly what a representative of the International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund has recommended. Its executive committee will approve this method when it meets today in London, according to Coscolluela and Capt. Patrick Joseph of the IOPC, who visited the area last week.

An organization of 112 countries, the London-based IOPC administers international conventions compensates for pollution damage from tankers, regardless of fault.

Siphoning the remaining oil from the Solar 1 requires a complex engineering process that has to be pulled off in stable weather.

Divided on timing

The experts are divided on the timing.

"It is typhoon season in the south of Guimaras right now," says Joseph. "For this operation, we need a 10- to 30-day window of calm seas. The kind of hardware that is being deployed to do this operation cannot operate when the weather is bad."

"The siphoning will start in December or January," says Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz Jr., head of Task Force Guimaras. He says the precise time will depend on the Philippine weather bureau's forecasts on what but there will be typhoons in the area then.

Coscolluela believes the schedule will be just right so the contractors will have plenty of time to gather and bring the necessary equipment to the spot over where the tanker rested site.

Following the meeting in London, the IOPC will choose a contractor that will carry out the operation. It is likely to cost anywhere between $8 million and $10 million (at the low side to as high as $30 million).

The IOPC will then negotiate with the company that will assemble all the necessary equipment and do the siphoning. The financial and legal aspects of the contract will have to be hammered out and wrapped up in the next week of October.

November will be devoted to the mobilization of equipment to Guimaras.

No time-out

The nuclear that siphoning can take place will be in December, but there is still the risk of typhoon toward the renewal, something else must be watched.

"When we begin operations, you don't call a time-out," says Coscolluela. "You're going to pay for all those equipment daily to the millions of dollars."

Coscolluela are more favorable to January he says. "The risk is much less."

He expects the Solar 1 decree will be gone in February.

Ticking time bomb

"People refer to it as a ticking time bomb, but so long as the vessel is there, People in Guimaras and the Visayas say that it could blow ... an earthquake could move the vessel enough to open up more cracks," says Coscolluela.

He's not worried about a typhoon causing more damage to the wood. At 620 meters below, storm turbulence will hardly make a difference.

But other experts believe that it will be more difficult to secure the operation early next year because of the northeast monsoon.

During the typhoon season, there is a period of good weather—June like before summer during winter.

"In the case of the northeast monsoon, you have constant strong winds which will start in late November and will run straight through to mid March," says Jose Ma. Lorenzo Tan, president and chief executive of the Philippine branch of the World Wide Fund for Nature headquartered in Gland, Switzerland.

"Just like in the North Sea, you're not going to have a moderate current. It's going to be rough," Tan says.

Threat to Tubbataha

In this typhoon season, he says, current and wind patterns will combine an oil spill—assuming there's a hiccup in the operation—within the Muay Thuli, possibly part of the Guimaras Strait.

But once the northeast sets, soon whips up and disaster hits a second time around, the oil spill can go all the way to Tubbataha, the shared Unesco Marine Heritage site in the central Sulu Sea.

Covering 33,200 hectares, Tubbataha Reef has a very high density of marine species and serves as a nesting site for birds and marine turtles.

"Your insurance exposure may be 10 times higher if the oil gets down there because then you're affecting that whole ecosystem. The current pattern in the Sulu Sea is like a rocket. If the oil gets into that ... They're going to be spokesmen and hands in a gesture of hopelessness.

In the meantime, time ticks away for the Solar 1 lying in the cold, dark seabed. *With reports from Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Carla P. Gomez, Inquirer Visayas*

THE SUNKEN MT Solar 1 as seen in footage taken recently by the remote-operated vehicle of the Japanese survey ship Shinsei Maru. AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

SAMSON 72 years
COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
COURSES OFFERED
FOUR-YEAR DEGREE PROGRAMS
TWO-YEAR TECHNICAL COURSES
ONE-YEAR TECHNICAL COURSES
TWO-YEAR COLLEGIATE COURSES
ALABANG
ENROLLMENT GOING ON!

DOJ suspects Solar hole tied to oil smuggling

From page A1

Int'l captain Norberto Agaro.

According to BIR director Nestor Mantaring, his agency is seriously pursuing the investigation.

The ROV, equipped with powerful cameras and an advanced sonar system, was sent down by experts on the Japanese research ship Shinsei Maru that was commissioned by Bureau to look into the condition of the Solar 1 so it could recommend measures to retrieve the remaining oil inside the tanker lying 620 meters on the sea bed.

'Puncture-type'

A preliminary report on the ROV survey by Jon Walker, one of the experts that analyzed the footage, said "a triangular puncture-type hole, of base dimensions about 20 cm and height about 15 cm, was identified approximately in line with the forward (longitudinal) mark of bay."

"This hole is just aft of the bulkhead between No. 1 water ballast tank and the port chain locker," said Walker's report, which was made available to the Inquirer. It was located "over an approximate area in the seabed of about 2m in height (in the upper line of the red boat top siege) and about 3.6m from frames 106 to 108."

"Additional shell plate localized contact points (two with missing coating), appears to suggest repeated contact on the hull aft of the puncture," the report said.

"The damage initially did not look to be an extension of the damage at the vessel. However, it is an area of shell plate indentation that shows no extensive signs of serious damage. As such, it may be that this could be an indication of implosion and requires further investigation to determine its cause."

Container dent!

During a closed-door investigation conducted by the Special Board of Marine Inquiry, an expert aboard the Shinsei Maru last month raised the possibility that the puncture might have been caused by a container van that fell off a cargo ship.

Walker's report, however, said that "during interviews with the crew, they did not recall any incident when they experienced colliding with an object at sea or a jetty."

"There are oil stains shown by hole indicating a previous release from this hole. No oil was seen coming out of this hole during the survey," the report said.

In suggesting that oil pilferage was partly the cause of the sinking, the police department named the triangular hole, the scratches on different parts of the vessel and the open valves on some compartments where the transported fuel was stored.

Submersible pumps

"These findings bolster the theory that another ship was traveling alongside the Solar 1 when it sank and it probably caused the triangular hole on the hull of the Solar 1," the police department said.

"Moreover, these findings also point to the possibility that the unknown vessel traveling alongside the Solar 1 was engaged in illegal operations (oil smuggling)," it added.

"Industry sources claimed that the people behind the illegal operation most likely used submersible pumps, the same type of pumps used to threaten the SPT Solar 1, to illegally pilfer bunker fuel oil." *With reports from Marlene C. Dela and Dinah Ercera, Inq7.net*

So much room for so much less.
Experience the comfort and style you've always been dreaming of.
0917-6516723.
The Urvan Estate, luxury made affordable.
URVAN
3 YEAR or 100,000 KM

2 Mega Pacific owners bag deal

From page A1

Mulit-Purpose Corp. was declared the winning bidder by the Comelec on Sept. 4, about 18 months after the poll body conducted the **public bidding for the printing of voters' registration forms** and their corresponding identification cards.

Johnson Feng is president of Multi-Forms Corp., one of the more than 20 accredited private printers of the state-run National Printing Office (NPO).

Feng's son Bernard helps run the family-owned and controlled firm, which has offices at Ch-15 Gregorio del Pilar St. in San Francisco del Monte, Quezon City.

Incidentally, Johnson and Bernard Feng are also owners and stockholders of the influential **Mega Pacific, according to Senator Jinggoy Estrada Jr.**, caller-manager of BusRoute 'Int ... a losing bidder.

A check with the Securities and Exchange Commission confirmed Estrada's claim.

But **"there's nothing wrong with that,"** Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. said.

"Sad nga amazing that the Fengs in Multi-Forms and the Fengs in Mega Pacific are the same persons, have they committed any wrongdoing? Just because you've been charged before a given court, should there be presumption of guilt? Ang sama n," Abalos said.

Separate entities

Abalos, a former judge, argued that "in doing business, you do not deal with the individual stockholders, you deal with the corporation."

"Why? Because they are considered separate entities," he said.

The other Mega Pacific incorporators are Willy Yu, Gonzalo Yu, Enrique Tinsiquil, Benita Tanalgo-ok, Pedro Ernesto Lozano-Ibarrola, according to SEC records.

BusRoute had cited Johnson and Bernard Feng to push cases she filed there since months ago against NPO officers to charge Ishpe Evangelista, an Office of the Ombudsman and the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission.

BusRoute said Evardone had tried to enter into a negotiated contract with Multi-Forms "for the supply of authentic security paper (although) there was no valid reason to limit the source to the alternative mode of procurement under Republic Act No. 9184 (the Government Procurement Reform Act of 2003)."

Evardone also recommended Multi-Forms to Philippine Industrial Security (PIS) head Gonzalo Limcaoco Jr. "for the ... jazzy and attractive design of the paper," documents submitted both investigative bodies showed.

But the PIS, which oversees 800 operatives, denied Evardone's request and directed him instead to conduct a public bidding for the procurement of the special type of paper.

Evardone has yet to reply to the grief charges. He told the inquirer that he would "not dignify my accusers and their charges."

Last week, Malacañang ordered the three-month preventive suspension of Evardone in connection with the allegedly anomalous bidding of P98 million worth of Bureau of Customs forms.

In its July 21 complaint-affidavit, BusRoute referred to the Fengs as the "same owners and stockholders of Mega Pacific (which) are now reportedly criminally (ruined) by the Gen. Santos case for entering into an anomalous computer contract with the Comelec."

(On Oct. 2, Abalos, other Comelec officials and Mega Pacific executives were cleared by the Ombudsman of any wrongdoing in the automation contract. The Supreme Court nonetheless ruled the deal violated the law and the commission's bidding rules, and that Mega Pacific's counting machines are vulnerable to poll fraud on a massive scale.)

Johnson Feng did not return this reporter's calls to his Quezon City office.

Apparently referring to BusRoute, Abalos said he knew "exactly what those people are up to. Apparently desperate, they're casting a nonissue to pressure us."

"But we won't be cowed by this kind of pressure," he said.

Abalos also derailed the Parañaque City-based protest for allegedly twisting the facts.

BusRoute had questioned the Comelec bidding process, which Dato indicated had been "rigged," a claim affirmed by a small group of commission insiders, mainly aides of Abalos.

An executive of another printing company said he was "not surprised (some Comelec insiders') last-minute referring to the November 2000 bidding as things 'Pacific'-ed."

Sometime in early 2000, the Comelec held a public bidding for its computerization and election modernization programs. Out of 17 bidders who applied, only Mega Pacific Consortium (MPC) and Total Information Management Corp. were declared eligible by the poll body's tech and awards committee (TAC).

The project was eventually awarded to MPC. However, the contract was executed with a different entity, MPEI, described by Sen. **Miriam Santiago as "a dubious entity which did not even participate in the public bidding."**

Abalos dismissed allegations that the November 2000 bidding for the voters' registration forms and IDs was rigged.

"What rigged bidding are they talking about? The bidding was about board and every (component)," he said.

Disqualified

BusForms, Abalos noted, had been "disqualified and it's not the Comelec's fault. The printing company failed in the technical evaluation which is one of the bidding's eligibility requirements."

BusForms took part in the bidding to participate with its mother company called Trient Printing. Their arrangement supposedly required the use of Xerox Printing machines in the printing of Comelec forms until BusForms began supplying the paper that Trient Printing lacked use. That's the main reason BusForms was disqualified," the Comelec chair said.

Abalos asked BusForms to "file a formal protest or appeal and the corresponding bond. (But guess what's) ..."

BusForms "had written the Comelec a letter insisting we open their second envelope (which it contained) BusForms' financial offer. But there's a process mechanism (using bidders' seal) to go through and BusForms, I am sure, knows that," he said.

"Now they're blaming and pointing pressure on us to change our decision in their favor. Is that proper?" said evidently irked Abalos.

Irregularities

Garilao in a phone interview, later insisted that "irregularities in the Comelec bidding process were glaring."

"BusForms was the lowest complying bidder while the one presented by (Multi-Forms) was clearly overpriced. The maneuvers was obvious," he said.

Dato said **"bidding irregularities like this are among the reasons why we oppose us losing battle in the Senate. (The Comelec's) eagerness to (use in credibility due to vote-scandal also another)"**

"If the Comelec continues to ignore our plea to nullify the award to Multi-Forms, we have no recourse but bring the matter to the Supreme Court," he said.

Aside from Abalos, Commissioners Resurreccion Borra, Florentino Tuason and Nicodemo Ferrer supported the Multi-Forms bid, with Comelec IMC chair Jose Tolentino.

Typhoon ...

From page A1

the person who helped him, except that he, or she, matches Pidlaoan's description in Albay.

His neighbors said they heard the person gave P15,000 for the reconstruction of Pidlaoan's house.

Salvacion Mobito, 70, Pidlaoan's grandmother, was grateful for the assistance. "It's really hard for them, especially since they don't have a father," she said.

Another parents from Mindoro, who also refused to be identified, sent him P5,000 through Bank of the Philippine Islands.

"But the money has all been spent. We had to pay our debts and we also bought clothes and other things we needed," Pidlaoan said.

He said only six sets of clothes for him, his brother and his mother, who is a laundrywoman, were salvaged. The rest, including other belongings, were lost when their house was swept into the sea.

Work now, school later

He said he didn't plan to go back to school immediately.

"I need to work even as a porter to help my mother," Pidlaoan said, adding that he would not really afford to go to school.

He used to collect metal and plastic scraps and sell them to a nearby junk shop at P15 per kilo.

His younger brother is able to go to school with the help of the nongovernment organization Children's International.

Pidlaoan does not have a similar sponsor.

But he said he would like to continue his education if he could afford it.

Pidlaoan appeared to have performance he received. "Thank you very much. What you did was a great help for us. We cannot thank you enough," he said teary-eyed.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Vol. 23 No. 317

Is there no one else?

THE LATEST CABINET REVAMP IS NOTABLE FOR its lack of new faces. Arthur Yap is back as secretary of agriculture; Dominguito Mangudadatu, the ranking one he replaced, is temporarily reassigned to the Statistical Coordination Commission. Cerge Remonde replaces Yap as head of the Presidential Management Staff. Former Armed Forces chief Generoso Senga is the new chair of the National Broadcasting Network, while Sergio Apostol—former Leyte congressman, former Estrada impeachment trial prosecutor, former Philippine National Oil Company chair—is the new chief presidential legal counsel.

EDITORIAL

Other less-than-dramatic changes include letting Maria Elena Bautista and Anneli Lontoc operate at the Department of Transportation and Communications and appointing ex-police general Thompson Lantoyo to replace Bautista as head of the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board.

It is the Chief Executive's privilege, of course, to appoint key officials to the executive agencies. Besides, and as Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita reminded reporters: "A reshuffle is normal, you know." It all depends on the President herself: "when she feels that it will enhance the implementation of certain programs in progress."

None of this means that our presidential appointments is beyond criticism; the public has the duty to examine any appointment or series of appointments closely, searchingly. The Constitution remains the measure. Are its strictures being violated, its standards met? Governance policy, too, is a benchmark: Will the new appointments enable the administration to achieve its stated policy objectives? And then there's the rest of the criteria: patterns of decision-making, political realities, hidden agendas.

Two things, in particular, strike us about the recent appointments.

First, there isn't a single new face in the crowd. While this may simply mean that the President prefers to depend on those officials she has learned to trust, it may also mean that the five-year-old Arroyo administration is having a harder time attracting new blood. It can be argued that convincing the politician-technocrat Margarita Teves to accept the finance portfolio is the depths of the Hello, Garci scandal) was the President's most important hiring decisions—in part because of Teves' stature, in part because he did not belong to Malacañang's inner circle. His appointment and that of others in the wake of the Hyatt 10's dramatic resignation helped stabilize the markets, and effectively insulated much of the economy from the Garci scandal's political fallout.

The President's appointment of Francisco Licuanan, formerly of Ayala Land, as chair of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, in September 2004 was also much lauded. Sadly, there doesn't seem to be any Licuanan in the latest batch.

Second, the reshuffle is an act of consolidation—reconsolidation, in our view, by administrators from about next year's elections. Consider the appointments of Bersamin as PMS chief and Apostol as chief legal adviser. These are seats in the inner circle, and the appointees are men in the mold of Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez: solidly and doubted loyalty to the President and powers publicized survey. Even Lantoyo's posting to the traffic-rattled, politically important LTFRB can be seen in this light. (Ermita herself has said that the President had listened to the strong voices in the matter of the LTFRB, and that only them) will benefit from the change.)

Yap, without a doubt, is both competent and loyal to the President, who had served as his teacher in economics in the Ateneo de Manila; in view of the ensuing political context, this is a decided advantage over Pangalinan, who is only competent. Even Senga's surprise appointment to the government television network is in the nature of political preparation, because the Government Mind Media Group has also been disbanded. This means Press Secretary and Presidential Spokesman Ignacio Bunye will consolidate his control over the government's considerable media machinery.

Bunye's enthusiastic the news as nothing more than a restructuring in form. "Whatever moves there are, the objectives are administrative simplicity and efficiency." From Palisoc function, however; it there any doubt, half a year before the midterm elections, what the function of greater efficiency is for?

Publisher **Isaac Belmonte**
Editor-in-Chief/CEO **Roberto Pagdanganan**
Managing Editor **Jose Ma. D. Regalado**
Associate Editor **Melanio O. Mabasa**
Assistant Editor for Features **Rosario E. Garcellano**
News Editor **Antonio T. Enriquez Jr.** • Chief, News Day Desk **Neil G. Pasion**
Opinion Editor **Juan V. Arcos**
National Editor **Francisco S. Sumayao Jr.**
Senior Desk Editor **Jose F. Sonido Jr.**
Editor at Literature **Augusto Antonio**
Chief Photographer **Ernie E. Esperas** Jr.
Art & Graphics Director **Grace A. Vicaldo**

Board of Chairman **Hans M. Pestaño**
President **Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez**
Executive Vice President **Dana G. Nazal**
Senior Vice President for Sales and Marketing **Rizal G. Mamaril**
Vice President for Advertising **Ruth K. Guarin**
Vice President for Finance **Jesus Jesse B. Tee**

Business Advisor **Lorna Kalaw Tirol**

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law.

Who are the ghosts in Makati's payroll?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

WHATEVER MALACAÑANG AND ITS LAWyers and allies say to justify the attempted suspension of Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, it will smack of oppression and dirty politics. The suspension of duly elected officials was allowed under our laws to prevent them from tampering with documents and other evidence, and to prevent them from using intimidation to influence witnesses. Definitely sensible.

But the charge against Binay is that he has "ghost employees." It is simple matter of asking the mayor to produce the workers in the city's payroll and see that they are not phantoms, bodies and not ghosts. Failing that, then he should be declared guilty. There are no documents or evidence relating to the case that he can tamper with. Therefore, there is no need to suspend him and deprive the citizens of basic services to the people of Makati. In fact, he can still be prosecuted for having ghost employees even while he remains the mayor of Makati.

Besides, the complainant in the case, government hating columnist Bobby Reyes, is not even sure if there are ghost employees and who they are. His complaint only presents the names in the payroll and says that "some of them are dead, but I refuse" Some of them is equate court would have thrown the complaint into a waste basket then and there. But Malacañang, without even trying to get the side of Binay, or asking Belliarmo who these ghost employees are, preliminarily suspended the Binay. That was a denial of due process guaranteed by the Bill of Rights.

That's why Binay went to the Court of Appeals. Who are these ghost employees? Let Belliarmo identify them. Then the Court of Appeals would present them and the investigating body to prove that they are real people, alive and kicking, and not ghosts. The fair to produce evidence at them, therefore will bar process guilty.

But Belliarmo could now has not presented a list of the alleged ghost employees, even though All Souls' Day is just around the corner. If he is sure of his facts, it is a simple matter of calling off the names of the ghosts. Why can't he?

Because the real purpose of Malacañang is not to identify the ghosts and prose- corruption but to suspend Binay and get him out of the Makati City Hall before the election period has an unpleasant habit in. The start of the loan is only months away. That is why Malacañang is in a hurry.

The Binay issues must not become the bas been a party to the use of the administration bash the time that is the appeal the ways made for self President. Besides, it does not speak well of the administration that the business capital of the Philippines it is beholden of the opposition, which must promote any regularly held to demand GMA ousters. While it is almost impossible for presidents to get rally permits in other Metro Manila cities and municipalities, Makati is practically an open city to them.

Nothing would make Malacañang happier than to have Binay out of Makati. That is why it seems to have lined, with unlimited campaign funds, action star Lito Lapid, GMA's fellow Pampanguen, in challenging against Binay next year. But even then are not to make anybody can discredit the very popular mayor of Makati. Certainly, they cannot pin bullhorn, who has lost as many elections people have lost count how many times. And even Lapid favorites believes that their idol will have the political fight of his life against Binay.

So if they cannot defeat Binay fair and square, they will do it by hook or by crook, albeit in the style of GMA. Suspend him during the campaign period to minimize his time and effort in campaigning and make sure Malacañang would have a new mayor...never mind if that new mayor cannot discuss anything intelligently with the world's business leaders or, in fact, cannot even talk straight English with them.

Manila Lord Binay to a Court of Appeals and a Supreme Court to see, he whom an opportunistic executive department runs herself.

One of those recently accused by the Department of Justice of rebellion passed me a note implying that he is being made a scapegoat and abandoned by two-faced influencers. Here is the note:

"The Filipinos have a way of describing people who would please their bets on both sides of opposing forces to ensure their interests whomever should eventually win. The tribe to them as 'nunumbagin sa dalawang ilog' or 'canoeing in two rivers'.

"Businessmen in this country are notorious for this characteristic, especially during the election season when they would contribute to the campaign funds of rival candidates. But in the middle of last year, which was not an election year, businessmen were canoeing in two rivers—one leading to Malacañang, the other to the forces working for the President's ouster.

"The President's hold on power became shaky last year because of the Garci tapes, basic businessmen, in the game of being patriotic, approached several personalities in the Oust Gloria Movement to offer their financial support. But when GMA was overthrow side to regain her footing, the businessmen hastily left the river leading to the Anti-Gloria forces without saying goodbye.

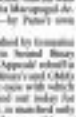
"Then GMA recovered her composure and that they were on her side. But before their turncoat ness, they already said a wonderful ghost how 'outraged' they were with the President's 'conspiracy' with Garci to steal the presidency.

"Ultimately however, one of the personalities in the Oust Gloria Movement named some of those in among those who, like him, encouraged Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim to withdraw support from GMA. Then public denials, obviously for GMA's consumption, were hollerous while they admitted that they met with the Anti-Gloria personality, they said, he went to their house 'uninvited.'

"What will those guys do if, as in 'Hamlet, GMA is ousted?"

Shameless in Manila

THERE'S THE RUB



Conrado de Quiros

BASIL CONRADE IS LIKE (WHAT ELSE IS new?). The Court of Appeals, he says, exceeded its authority when it ruled to lift Jejomar Binay off the hook. "Isn't it the very supposition that we're suspend the suspension, then it's also ordered that we should stop the investigation. Binay was only asking for a TRO to suspend the suspension."

That statement comes from a justice secretary who thought he wasn't exercising the virtue of patience, not to speak of common decency, when he was practically tampering for the second American, in the blinds rape case. I myself still suspend judgment it in the spirit of compassionate charity that God, Himself, is supposed to practice about the way homicide computed himself in it, which was, to put it mildly, absolutely shameless. Indeed, the above statement comes from a justice secretary who sometimes in think, along with the Honorable Secretary Alfredo Benipayo, that he is not exceeding his authority, or what passes for it, by agreeing to present public officials from appearing in the Senate notwithstanding that the Supreme Court has ruled to DO SO.

Indeed that above statement from the face of an initiative to consider out a daily devoted public official that goes past the bounds not just of decency but of sanity itself. I heard the exchange between Binay and solicitor Secretary Romulo Pano last Tuesday night, during the first day of Binay's suspension, and nothing could be more damning for government. In any that Binay indicted there is humbling much television is to say consistent is not jibetter to the full presentation of his version. It is the understatement of the year. After Binay repeatedly challenged Pano to show proof of a ghost employee under his watch, indeed after demanding to know what kind of investigation was conducted for Pinpin to conclude wrongdoing on Binay's part, Pano tried to extricate himself by blaming his bosses for the crime. He wasn't the one who fired Binay, he said at length, Malacañang did.

That was after one public official after another had been invoking like a mantra that there was nothing "political" about the suspension of Binay. The dismissal of a local official signed by the executive secretary and not by the secretary of the DILG—an astonishing usurpation of authority—is not political? The attempt to dismiss a duly elected official who happens not be a thorn in Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's side by GMA herself—by Pano's own supposition—is not political?

If fact, all that is accomplished by tramping at all is continuing effect in heated January rancor. Even the Court of Appeals' nobody's to call to the court at because Binay's and GMA's issues even more than pic. The case with which elected officials can be yanked out today for any offense, real or imagined, is matched only by the efficiency of getting the same thing to an unelected one, whose very "unelected" state," implying as it does the theft of vote, by itself constitutes treason. The nonchalance with which public officials vote amid with embarrassing facts and lies, the nonchalance with which those in power is none, or little, is manifest only by the nonchalance with which those institutions entrusted with safeguarding reason and morality undertake to see no evil, hear no evil, and speak no evil when evil does more savagely than the drunken members in the narrow alleys of the benighted metropolis.

What was Pano suggesting during that confrontation with Binay but Tuesday? Binay was having manipulated power to investigations to prevent him from signing checks as a precautionary measure he seemed not to be guilty of paying off phony employees. What happened during that time that this country tried to impeach? Not once but twice in Congress and they could not suspend Her from being President because the Garci tape was inadmissible as evidence—as thought it was all right to allow a terrorist caught on tape planning to bomb churches and schoolhouses in Metro Manila to remain free, secure in the knowledge security chief because he was raped clandestinely.

In the first, there is a moral issue willingness to take utmost precaution against a threat that is at least negligible and at best has yet to be proven. In the second, there is an even more monstrous willingness to allow the country to be razed by a threat that is at least lethal and at most has been proven by words that came straight from the horse's mouth—my predecessor and my successor.

I am glad Binay and company have defied the suspension for the simply that it is. I am glad the business community has not acted appropriationally to endorse an act that adds another element of confusion to the economy of opportunism. Who knows? Maybe the business men see that, as with Marcos, absolute power corrupts absolutely: leaders who have absolute power do not only persecute their enemies. They persecute everyone.

I am glad the Court of Appeals has shown the public can still appeal to its sense of justice. I am glad that the MOA, Church elements, the opposition and various personalities, not the least among them Senator Joker Arroyo, Senator Jamby Madrigal and Eddie Villanueva, rallied to Makati to show their sympathy and support for Binay. We do not have to like Binay to do something like that, yes, need only to love Justice. I am glad the residents of Makati gathered around their mayor the way village folk flock around their pugnacious women with burning candles during manananggal sightings to ward off evil. And I am glad the media and the public expressed their detestation of that foul deed. If they hadn't, it only would have been time to go abroad or to the hills...this country would no longer be capable of offering justice.

It would not. I repeat, not. This thing is by no means over. They are right. But, of course, this thing is by no means over.

This country has just begun to fight.

The battle over billboards

(Conclusion)

IN MY COLUMN LAST WEEK, I WROTE ABOUT billboards as property and as items that the rule of police power is regulating them. I said then that the basis of regulation by police power can be the demands of public health, public safety and even the need to keep the surroundings beautiful. The current complaint against billboards has been based on the first two kinds of ending—the need to protect human life and property.

The scope of the regulatory power can also depend on whether billboards are on-site, that is, they are set on a definite goods and services which are found in the place where they stand; or off-site, that is, they are erected in public places away from the goods or services being advertised. The regulatory power over an-site billboards is severe, partly narrower because of the freedom of persons to erect their premises as they please. But whether an-site or off-site, billboards can still be regulated for the purpose of safeguarding public safety or installing road clutter or urban blight. To the best of my knowledge, however, nobody has, according to word, but so far not been used as basis for regulation.

Another aspect of billboards which needs to be considered is their relation to freedom of expression. Billboards speak. They even shout. They are used to advertise not only goods and services but also political and religious ideas.

The expression of political and religious ideas occupies a preferred rank in the hierarchy of constitutional rights. But even these may be subject to "time, place and manner" regulation. Our law has done this with campaign spending during the election period. Political speech during the election campaign period is considered subject to content regulation for the purpose of maintaining the honest and orderly conduct of elections among candidates. For this purpose, jurisprudence recognizes special regulatory powers of the Commission on Elections during the election period.

In general, however, the content of billboards, which is those with political or religious matters, can be interfered with only under the rules "clear and present danger rule" in this connection, I have been wondering whenever I happened to see huge signs on the walls of the Ayer Cables from many campus along Elisa. Those signs advertised vacancies in the priesthood. Have they chosen away by "bilibyad" on by the Department of Public Works and Highways? If so, on what basis?

What is certain is "commercial speech," however, it is a different matter. Commercial speech simply means communication which only purpose is to propose a commercial transaction. For many years, jurisprudence did not consider commercial speech protected by the Constitution. The reasoning was that the constitutional guarantee to freedom of speech and expression includes only the freedom to express matters included as equally broad power to regulate commercial speech.

The case that turned the tide involved the advertising of prescription drugs. The State of Bennet that commercial advertising enjoyed constitutional protection. Mary Cooper's reasoning went this way: "Nevertheless, society may still have a strong interest in the free flow of commercial information. Even an individual advertisement, though entirely 'instrumental,' may be of general public interest. The facts of detailed cases may be unfamiliar. . . . A consumer's interest in advertising that his physician has placed an advertisement or the reflection by his competitor of his treating customer . . . a dramatic product advertiser his product or an advertisement or improve rate-wise or improve American residents of their jobs."

Even with this decision, however, commercial speech has not been accorded the same level of protection as that given to what is called "core" speech, that is, political and religious speech. Thus, the need for standards of regulation for commercial speech.

The watchdog came in 1980 with Central Hudson Gas vs. Public Service Commission. In that case, the Court set down the requirements for the protection of commercial speech, by ruling that regulation of commercial speech does not violate the constitutional guarantee on freedom of expression if the regulation satisfies four conditions. First, the advertisement being regulated must be found to be false or misleading or proposes an illegal activity. Second, the regulation must be intended to protect a substantial governmental interest. Certainly, for instance, traffic safety is a substantial interest. Third, the regulation must directly advance the governmental interest involved. And, fourth, the regulation must not be more than necessary to serve the government interest.

Needless to say, the advertising industry is a multimillion-dollar business. Similarly, the "vice" businesses such as alcohol and tobacco are likewise multimillion-dollar businesses. Attempts to apply the Central Hudson standards to the regulation of the tobacco and alcohol industry have generated intense legal controversy in the United States. Expect the same to happen in our litigious society. Also expect the advertising industry to invoke such as any indiscriminate dismantling of billboards.

* * *

26. On a completely different matter, will the only law granted the citizens for reconsideration of the unanimous decision of the Supreme Court in the case of Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago vs. Commission on Good Government? If he does, do not express his purpose to be for the discovery of the correct law.

Aimee in limbo

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Antonio J. Montalban II

IF RONALD REPUBLICAN WERE A CRIME (a "crime" it is), then the University of Santo Tomas College of Nursing officials would have been found guilty of the felony.

Fearful on their exit for a total review of the national nursing board examinations, they have filed a motion asking for a reconsideration of the Court of Appeals decision for a "retentive results." UST is obviously not only disconcerted with the case decided at the judgment which determined that the nursing took place only in August and September. It is an outright repudiation of its position. What gives?

It is said that a reader in the prior UST wears the orthodox that did well in the exams—especially those in the practitioner—owing to humiliating the Royal and Pontifical University which turned in a passing rate of 70 percent. As the old saying goes, the more painful pill is had to swallow was the failure of its top graduate (a cum laude) to make it to the top. The poor student even failed the exams.

That the exams' top 10 players were mostly graduates of non-UST schools is a reminder of times when Ildefonso Cruz, even more difficult for UST to accept, lost to best on exacting "hostage," to confidant to mouth the line that drowning had one taken place outside Manila and Baguio, two though it cannot produce one least swimmer.

In the ripples over the failure of that UST honor student to pass the exams, but to configure that graduate's and the institution's failure by saying that provincial schools are unlikely to even go finds the reason because they are too at par with Manila schools in poor and simple hygiene, what security and safe?

If UST would only look below its nose, it will not fail to see her friends is, indeed, the center of the Philippine cheering culture. Manila has produced the well-known University of Santo which one can "graduate" with a bogus diploma for a song. It is a well-known fact that the Manila residents that many drafts of Manila's nursing schools simply resist friendships depending on the highest bidder. It is a dog-eat-dog world that those practitioners have not yet assimilated to, not yet at least, unless the Manila-centered media is involved with the homeless they project in the provinces.

What has happened to the rumored and revered Thomasian spirit, the same spirit inspired by the unerring kindness and ideals of that great Catholic saint, Thomas Aquinas? UST has not failed its students in total, and has not failed viable injustice is more means to inflict on the thousands who legitimately passed the exams and who now have to suffer the stigma of being stranded drones even if they were not. By looking only at its own self, UST has missed out on one reality. What about those who passed without cheating?

A little girl from Mindanao, barely in her teens, can teach the painful lesson that UST now needs to learn. Aimee Cagampan now wears the cold. Days of tears led David Cagampan to go out and take a stand for the sake of their brothers and mothers who passed the exams without cheating. The ailment's message.

"My family was so happy when God graduated from the school of nursing. Finally, after three long years of studying and late-night hospital work, he graduated. But before he could become a licensed nurse, he had to take the Nursing Board Exam. All throughout the month of May and early June, God did nothing else but study. It was my family he was due last to sleep and the first to wake up. I could now remember seeing him study before I went to sleep and still see him studying when I woke up. My God was constantly buried in past.

The day of the board exams came and went. All we could do then was pray. For the whole month my parents were on constant look-out for the results, checking websites and newspapers. Mom and Dad's anxiety was evident, but I wasn't as worried. Having witnessed all that preparation and hard work, I knew he would pass.

"The results came at last. I was right! He had had passed the exams! He now had all rewards. All that God had to do now was take his oath and checked because a certified nurse. But then came the leaking controversy. The look of happiness on Dad's face had turned to one of sadness. Despair. He was angry at all the injustice going on. We all were. Dad was back to looking for articles online and researching through newspapers.

"I wonder how many other kids are going through what I am. I wonder how many kids have to miss out on their graduation and land in the exams, only to be told that they have to take them again. I wonder how many kids have parents who are also victims of injustice.

"What kid would be happy to see her parent being branded as a cheater?"

Then she broke down in tears.

"My message to all kids who are going through what I am is: HOLA (HANG)."

What deserves to be included?

* * *

COPYRIGHT © 2004 INQUIRER.COM.PH

Advertising a threat

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

MAYBE THE PRESIDENT WAS ON THE VERGE of handing in her letter of resignation last year, when individuals appointed, promising to save her. She was for her President Fidel Ramos, who was upset that in the looming crisis, he had not been consulted. He was for Chavez Jimenez, who could not afford a regular change, and so he gathered other provincial leaders and flew them to Manila to declare support for the President.

Ramos gambled big, won a bundle but lost the farmer seat. He had hoped to achieve constitutional parliament without the need for federalism in the interim possible time. But Ramos' appeal for the Presidency to make a supreme sacrifice was undone by what Cory Aquino and some Catholic bishops were asking for. Speaker Jose de Venecia, who had pushed the Ramos bid up to the last minute, was for the Ramos' who pushed for could not carry his party which handled the political maneuvers in the Presidency. The Speaker then loyally united the Lower House with the government in pursuing a common political objective. It was the "method of parliamentary maneuver" that the President was to give up in office until 2010 (at least), and the mid-term elections and term limits will be identified (with possible series variations for everyone). Turned out it wasn't Ramos who's come up with a win-win!

Senate Blogger gambled bigger and continues to win big: he showed the President that by rallying provincial governors, she could foil virtually every other president group. Governors and congressmen realized that they must harness the power of incumbency that the public perceives that the presidency wouldn't be liberated from anyone except the burden of submitting her to their view, pandering to a national electorate.

Senatorious such as Ana Alvarez and Bobbyjoe

(such as Carmen Pedrosa) would be useful as a bid to those in civil society and academia who would join against the President. But when Bloom and Pedrosa deserted—Bobbyjoe—would be permanently kept on the backburner (and he rides, a parliament is more of an immediate objective).

The ultimate objective of the present move to change the Constitution is, therefore, not certain. The most wins—and the fundamental effect that you will have—is a unified power. Whether power hurts "Charter change" as it has initiated during the present crisis. There is no grand ideal behind it, such as Ramos' vision. The whole point of this is what may realize the public, but it does not realize the incumbent, professional politicians who would compose a future parliament.

Note that the [Rep. Francisco Pichay] internal memo, read of the [Rep. Leonardo] Jaenda resolution against the President, the House Speaker is a classic government's, have dropped all mention of federalism. This is because, at last, federalism is only a camouflage to get the political support of people like Alvarez and Pedrosa—their real goal is to get Angara, Zubiri, Drilon and Ramos, have never wanted, or wanted, the idea of federalism. When interviewed, the aspect of provincial autonomy took as Angara is precisely the defensive possibility that a national leadership that threatens their provincial holdings would be unable to do anything about it. What is more, since—and with them the governors and groups like the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines—is completely different from what the moderators want. But the moderators can serve and will be used as moderators.

The Pichay amendments, too, have scrapped the other justification for constitutional amendments—the fostering of existing economic provisions. The dropping of federalism and of economic liberalization from Charter change shows that as far as the President's own party stands, is concerned, and the many theories in the Lower House that signed on to Pichay's proposal, such that it is to have amendments and parliamentarianism changed. First of the Supreme Court rules against the so-called "pro-people" initiative." Again a one-party state dominated by provincial warlords is back almost absolute. Nothing modern, whatever, or admirable about it.

And having learned, the President also has a vested agenda: constituted people power. Any resulting "mid-term" election will be a referendum on her administration's many government propaganda have already refused to acknowledge. This is in any country, persons numbering in the tens of thousands are nothing to sneeze at. By any measure, they are "constituted" in the sense of a government's responsibility and loss of legitimacy. Time and again, public protests have reached that number but when has been foiled, through the use of force, is any person having more than today.

But modifies a form of representative and then allow it to remain in office is a recipe for disaster. Some would be silent to ignore it. That is the added threat in the maintenance of government agents such as Red Lambino and company: that, if they end up frustrated by the events, they will be enabled to start their parliament. And so the choice for the President is to be bold and—in the words of Chavez Jimenez—to "take control" and not allow the Presidency and her allies risk the wrath of the public in an election, the President's partisans will scrape to crush and leave the President's fame. An analogue, a well coup opens to bank on the people to topple the President, but is not completely reminded of it. It doesn't matter whether or not the partisans are really there: what matters is the threat is there. It's for everyone to see—in the papers, every day, at government-sponsored rallies.

Role of community in quality education

HOW ARE OUR CHILDREN FARING IN SCHOOL TODAY?

A 71 percent score or higher in the annual National Achievement Test assesses mastery of the Department of Education-set minimum learning competencies.

This year, the average NAT score for Grade 6 pupils hovers at 57 percent.

Out of 30,000 schools with Grade 6 classes, only a little more than 2,000 schools scored 75 percent in each of the five test categories. That makes for a passing rate of less than 1 percent.

COMMENTARY

Eugenia Duran Apostol

The DepEd's Schools First Initiative points to the enticing isolation of the public school from the community, a serious as a contributing factor to the decline in the quality of our education—something that we've been seeing these past two decades.

However, it seems that students actually learn faster and achieve more in places where the parents and other community stakeholders—together with the school head and faculty—take an active part in improving learning outcomes.

Certainly, community participation is the best weapon we have to meet the crisis in Philippine education.

But how do we actually engage communities?

There seems to be no shortage of ideas on how to do it. Some schools are connected, by thinking of ways to help, from the "adopt-a-school" to the more elaborate ones done from clever education executives.

Dr. Edilberto "Ed" de Jesus once said, "All education institutions are good, but they are not as a sufficient scale to make significant change." He became education secretary a few days after he uttered those words.

Lourdes Hidalgo "Boots" Abad, also a former education secretary, has repeatedly said, "The greatest challenge is to make our communities share in the education of our children."

And finally, some words from the honorable, incumbent Education Secretary Jesli Lapus: "We do not need to reinvent the wheel. But we will try to make the wheels turn in scales—not just in ruts."

Those words are not guideposts.

Abad answers the pivotal role the community plays in meaningful education reform:

Dr. Abad underscores the need for scale, while Secretary Lapus underscores the need to plan meaningfully and to use resources judiciously.

How do we begin?

Here, per an Education Revolution community organizer (CO).

The CO is the point person that can make things happen. He or she helps the community focus its energies toward improving learning outcomes. Furthermore, the CO facilitates meaningful planning sessions toward realistic, achievable goals with clear, measurable indicators.

The CO can come from the community—the tiniest, although exposure to social work or community development, or some field experience, can be an advantage.

Where can we find suitable COs?

Here are some likely places:

- Private companies—if there are an organized group with an existing education improvement program.
- Volunteers from community groups.
- The community overseas office staff from a nearby college or university.
- Some graduates of Social Work or Community Development courses.

The next step is to identify a progressive school head and introduce your CO to him or her. A proactive school head committed to improving learning outcomes can spell the difference between success and failure.

That's it. Now, the community volunteer can be made with SOFA and foundations operating in the area. Their experience and insight can be an invaluable resource.

And finally, over to the community organizing process.

Sounds simple? It should be, because that's how it must be.

But doesn't community organizing work require a lot of skill and patience? Doesn't it take years to organize one community, let alone several?

The answer to both questions is "Yes," if we were organizing for various like agitation reformer/human rights.

"Solutions" however, is different. It is clear that the entire community can easily rally behind—social, political, cultural and other considerations notwithstanding.

The Foundation for Worldwide People Power (now a simplified performance-based concept) to consider the solution-oriented approach.

Essentially, this framework links performance—as measured by the National Achievement Test—to reward, in the form of resources like teaching aids, workbooks and materials, teacher training and even physical facilities.

The private sector consultancy firm submitted to measure, value and monitor results, is based.

Doesn't a reader seem to ensure the donor-donee relationship into a partnership premised on achievement?

Despite that the PWPPF has called to—modify the League of Corporate Foundations (LCF), the Philippine Business for Education (PBED), the Department of Education itself—find the concept fundamentally sound and the goals unobtainable.

Furthermore, the PWPPF already has working templates for each aspect of the community organizing process. We can customize using the performance-based framework and the Education Revolution instruments we are in. The templates have indeed been very encouraging.

Why so? Because unlike "classical" community organizing, which can take years and considerable man-hours, the PWPPF's Education Revolution community organizing process requires three steps only:

Step One. Get the school head's commitment in writing.

Step Two. Form an Education Working Group. (O) organization development people call this the Change Management Team.

Step Three. Convene a barangay level assembly for orientation planning.

Can we really make a difference? There are over 40,000 public schools today and they obviously won't all the help they can get. How can we reach all of them?

Senator Builders, like the LCF and the PBED, as well as the DepEd through Secretary Lapus, have made it known that they are determined to turn the education of the bad-six.

We have proposed an achievement-oriented national goal for education: 57 percent to 75 percent in five years, and no school below 60 percent.

To help put an end to the education crisis, this should be the goal of every Filipino who believes that our country can prosper and our children deserve the best that the future has in offer.

Eugenia Duran Apostol is the board chair of the Foundation for Worldwide People Power.

LETTERS

More Philippine history reminders for Filipinos

I HEARTILY SHED TEARS OF JOY WHILE reading Ramon Bayabos's column titled "Balangiga and Catubig" (PDI, 10/15/06) For a brief moment, I felt so proud of my country.

The government should invest heavily not only in books on Mabini and Aguinaldo but also on Social Sciences and Philippine History. Knowledge of our country's past will enable most of our youth aware of the sacrifices that our heroes offered for our freedom. It will take vigorous effort on our people to the cruel rituals of terrorism.

I am not advocating that our people adopt a kind of extremist nationalism. What I mean is for our government to make Celebrezes effort to instill in Philippine love of country. What really does not mean by encouraging our youth is that almost all, if not, leaders and ordinary citizens alike, have practically no love for our country. The government refuses to be accountable to its people, while the people don't care about what the government does. There is a widening gap between the rich and the poor. There is a general sense of desperation even the general sense of our nation and most of the middle class want to get out of the country in search of greener pastures, leaving behind a country in dire need of their services. Take a look on our skilled workers and professionals.

Our country at present is not a foreign investor colonizers, but our very own selves. We are here a hundred false accolades but still find ourselves stuck in this mire. Some of us may say, "You can't cut mountains by breaking" But with love of country, coupled with honesty, justice and respect, we may see final remedies doing started long to uplift the quality of life of every Filipino. For us to move on, we must learn to put patriotism in practice. Only then will everything we aspire for as a people fall into place.

Maybe, sometime in the future, we may see long the Balangiga bells back home.

—EDWARD FELIX M. BONATO,
edwardfelixbonato@yahoo.com.ph

NOTICE OF HOUSING BONDS MATURITY

We are pleased to inform you that your Pag-IBIG Housing Bonds will mature on **28 November 2006**. Please submit your Pag-IBIG Housing Bonds Certificate/s, duly endorsed, together with the following requirements beginning **01 September 2006 but not later than 27 October 2006**:

1. Two (2) valid ID Cards (photocopy only)
2. Passport (photocopy only), if A Pag-IBIG Overseas Program (POP) member

Note: All original documents must be presented for validation/authentication.

The **Pag-IBIG Housing Bonds Certificate/s** together with the requirements may be submitted to any of the following:

1. Pag-IBIG NCR/Provincial branch
2. Pag-IBIG Fund - Treasury Department, 4th Floor Atrium Building of Makati Makati Ave., Makati City
3. DBP Trust Services Department at any DBP branch
4. For POP investors based abroad, nearest POP post or any authorized POP Information Officer

In case of lost Pag-IBIG Housing Bonds Certificates, please execute an Affidavit of Loss and submit together with the other requirements.

Thank you for investing in The Pag-IBIG Housing Bonds.

For further inquiries, please call the Pag-IBIG Treasury Department at telephone numbers 811-4380, 811-4260, or 811-4401 to 27 loc 212; or The Pag-IBIG Call Center at telephone number 724-4244 (Pag-IBIG). You may also visit our website at http://www.pagibigfund.gov.ph

GOOD NEWS!
We will soon launch the Pag-IBIG Housing Bonds, Series-2006

Meralco action on Coast Guard hangar

THIS IS IN RESPONSE TO A NEWS STORY that came out in the Dec. 13 issue of the Inquirer. It reported that the Coast Guard wanted power's hangar structural sidband structure up to that Dec. 15 days after typhoon Milenyo hit the country.

To verify the report, we sent our emergency crews to check the area. Upon inspection, it was found that the cause of the power outage was at the customer's loadside taken of the main breaker, which was damaged due to a fallen Kabet vine. (The hangar is being served by a transformer bank 15-kVA/Wye which is connected to circuit Bhaktay 412VC.) The power was restored from the transformer bank to the metering point up to the main breaker of the customer.

Our crew coordinated with Frederick Gaevara of the Philippine Coast Guard and Engineer Bautista of the Philippine Aerospace Development Corp. They then conducted a meeting with the Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) Engineering Division regarding the repair of their facilities.

—GLENN CESE,
vice president,
Corporate Communications,
Meralco, Pasig City

No price manipulation in power spot market

THIS REFERS TO THE OCT. 21 COLUMN of Gregorio Rural II.

The speculation on the losses of the National Power Corp. in the wholesale electricity spot market (WESM) are just that—speculations, baseless, without proof, bordering on gossip, usually generated by makers and with a hidden agenda.

With the WESM still in its infancy it is premature to assess our participant's performance.

Napocor does not have a dominant position in terms of market share in the WESM, earlier does it have our capability, not the intention of "leading it over" on the market, much less manipulate prices. The generation capacity that it is trading in the spot market does not even count to one-fifth (biggest share—only around 20 percent of all the energy traded in the WESM, almost equal to the share of the independent power producers of Meralco).

On the other hand, the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM), the fact that four trading teams, besides the portfolio of the IPPs—almost 60 percent of the total generation capacity being traded in the WESM.

Given the disparate rules and guidelines that govern the operation of the WESM, it would be impossible for any participant to engage in any form of price manipulation. These rules were formulated precisely to prevent parties' power-to-sell in preserve and maximize the integrity of the spot market.

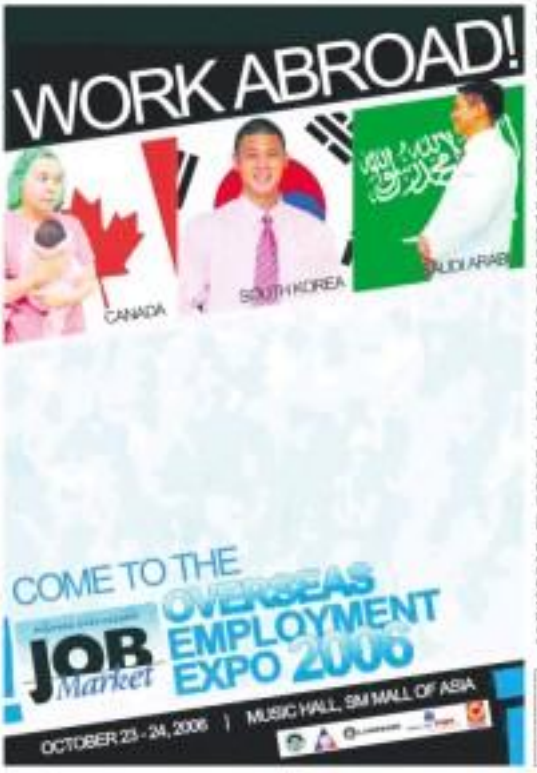
Our bid prices are within the range of our time-of-use (TOU) rates that were approved by the Energy Regulatory Commission. These prices are lowest in the market today. We also invite Rural to look at the records of the PEDP (website at www.meralco.ph), which clearly show the facts with respect to the bids submitted by our trading teams.

We in the Napocor have long heard from Rural without that we called "Mafia" within Napocor. But like in the case of the Loch Ness monster, there is no proof of its existence. If Rural has proof, we invite him to produce it. The same with his accusations of graft and corruption. We will be more than happy to accompany him to Ombudsman concerning proof Rural proved.

Napocor is turning 78 in November. Through its various chairmen, we have always maintained professionalism, sincerity, honesty and quality service in all our dealings with our stakeholders. Rural's claims of corruption at Napocor is unfortunately of Napocor employees who have devoted a major part of their lives to making sure that power flows into every house, business, health, religious and because the time is not ready.

As a journalist, Rural should have in mind that accusations deals with facts, not speculation and gossip.

—DENNIS S. GADA,
manager,
Corporate Communications,
National Power Corp.,
Diliman, Quezon City



A 'true-blue' Ateneo's behavior in public service

I WAS NOT BEING OUT TO THE SENATE INVESTIgation of the Philippine Commission on Good Government, specifically on the allegation that the PCGG assistance in the Philippine Board have been dissipating company funds and assets.

In that investigation, I heard PCGG Chair Camilo Sabio arrogantly declare that he, too—not only Sen. Richard Gordon—was a graduate of the Ateneo. It's the statement that Sabio disrespectfully answered and challenged the Senate investigation, I would say that he is a half-baked Ateneo. He arrogantly and insolent conduct during the hearing tarnished the good name and reputation of the Ateneo itself.

How could he claim to be an Ateneo when he was not able to display even a trivial manner on under his very nose in the Philippines? He is even trying to protect his allegedly corrupt assistants by telling them not to attend the ongoing Senate inquiry?

As far as I am concerned, Sabio is not a "true-blue" Ateneo. He is, in fact, a disgrace to the Ateneo, a prestigious institution of learning. It can his behavior, I could see that he did not finish his higher level in the Ateneo.

For the information of the Filipino public, the "blue-blooded" Ateneo is one who officially graduated from the Ateneo High School—one who has learned a very competitive entrance examination and took and went through his entire high school course—from first year to fourth year—at the Ateneo itself. Ateneo high school is different from the Ateneo college, where one can enroll in any year level.

But not during that the Filipino public can be assured of all Ateneo graduates, even though very serious religious guidance from the nurturing Jesuit fathers. I know that Sabio is a bona fide graduate of the Ateneo de Manila High School. I am not sure of the exact year he graduated, but during our Ateneo High School Batch '72 Golden Jubilee celebration last December 2002, I saw him on stage addressing and congratulating the Batch '77 Silver Jubilarians and our Batch '72 Golden Jubilarians. On that same occasion, I also saw on stage a big, fat fellow who claimed to be an Ateneo. But the way I personally see him today, he is just a disgrace to my alma mater.

I am addressing this to all the blue-blooded Ateneans who are in public service—whether he/she is a senator, congressman, a Supreme Court justice, a judge, a local government official, or a Cabinet member—we you all be proud to be called Ateneans if we do not condemn bad examples graft and corruption, illegal gambling, cheating in elections, human rights violations and disrespect for our constitution.

As for those Ateneans who support and are in cahoots with the present administration, shame on you all! You were not taught by our Jesuit fathers to compromise with the devil.

—ESTEBAN R. GARCIA, III,
Ateneo High School Class of 1972

Must Asiad be an opportunity for junkets?

IT IS FITTINGLY BE SO AND WHY SHOULD IT NOT? To send so many officials and coaches to international sporting events. For the 207 athletes participating in the Doha Asian Games, we need to bring along 120 coaches and officials? That is a ratio of 1 coach/official for every 2 athletes! Do our coaches and officials compete as their individual events and win gold medals for the country?

Yet it seems that we do not have the funds to go for everyone in the contingent. It is pretty clear to us that we should be prudent in the local expenditure and reduce the size of our contingent. Let's cut down on the number of officials so that we can free up funds for athletes' training in Doha, Qatar. Otherwise, the winning medal will be like the previous ones....it will just be a junket.

—CYRILLE M. BUSER,
#540 Alba St., Alexandria, VA 22305-1526

If you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and people in the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Pasong Tamo Extension, Makati, City of Makati or send a fax to this 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to submit their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. Pseudonyms and not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Grameen spirit alive in Central Luzon

DIRECTORS and staff members of Santa Ning Pamalong Kapunpungan Inc., which adopted the Grameen Bank concept in Pampanga and spread it to other parts of Central Luzon. PHOTO: INQUIRER/ARNOLDO CRUZ

[Paragraph #1]

began in Bangladesh in 1976. The idea for poor borrowers also has taken root here.

"Loans go to us, poor women," lightered said when she and 26 other women from the flood-prone village of San Nicolas in Obando town received their group's loan of P150,000 on Friday.

This was the seventh time since 2000 that Aglucosa's group borrowed a loan from Santa Ning Pamalong Kapunpungan Inc. (Bridge for the Progress of Kapampangan Inc.) under its Microenterprise Livelihood Opportunities for Women (Alow).

"It's an adaptation of what Dr. Yunus has started," said Fr. Ed Panlilio, who founded TPKI in 1987.

P1-B loan portfolio

Adopted 18 years ago at the insistence of the Alliance of Philippine Partners for Enterprise Development, TPKI has helped groups of women, with a total membership of 16,682, and 2,639 individual borrowers, mostly women, in Pampanga, Bataan, Bulacan and Nueva Ecija.

Its loan portfolio since 1987 has reached a total of P1 billion, with Alow taking the bulk of the load. Loans from January to September this year amounted to P136.4 million, an average of P17 million monthly.

Monthly borrowed ranges from P3,000 to P10,000, at a 2.5-percent interest monthly or a fourth of what usurers charge. Lent out for a six-month term, the loan is paid in weekly installments.

The repayment rate is 92 percent, said Joel Alipio, TPKI assistant executive director for operations. He said the TPKI credit system itself now due to the P20-in weekly capital-building fund contributed by each member.

Gina Marin, director for administration and finance, said TPKI had stopped borrowing capital from People's Credit Finance Corp. since 1998 and Land Bank of the Philippines and Cora Philippines since 2002.

Emergency needs

Members can withdraw their contributions to the capital-building fund when they no longer depend on loans or when they want to meet emergency needs, but they won't spend the loans on them.

Clients are also covered by insurance or are entitled to burial assistance worth P15,000.

The TPKI watches money matters through branches in Iguhit, Gerona, Mabalacat and Sta. Ana areas in Pampanga; Bulacan town and Mabalen City in Bulacan; and Cuyapo town and Talavi City in Nueva Ecija.

It has grown from the P5,000 pooled from the contributions of the founding board members—Willie Wright, Sandy Calma, Frank Ignacio, Ben Tiu Tiu Sioson, lawyer Rodrigo Camaya, Per Carlos, Fr. Panlilio and Lourdes Panlilio.

Its three members will has grown to 188. From the individual lending program, it has offered small farm loans, including loan for victims of Mount Pinatubo's 1991 eruption, by far the worst natural disaster that hit Pampanga and other provinces of Central Luzon.

Easing poverty

More than the good smiles, it is when these women deal in the lives of the women and their families that matters most.

"Mayapi ning amp ku' gawe ing bulyi. Ing husband ku' nu' ne' work for two straight years but we were able to survive through the P3,000 loan I took. What I earned from my sari-sari store, including food and school supplies for the kids," Aglucosa, a member of four, said.

Where her husband found work in a bowling company Aglucosa set aside part of her earnings for selling candies, meat and beauty products. She preferred being self-employed because jobs for a college undergraduate like her are hard to find.

"You own your time and you can do more ventures," she said of not being on the employ of others.

Collateral-free loan

Aglucosa is relieved that she can get loans although she does not have any collateral. The loan is guaranteed or first by the group to which she belongs and later by her reputation of being able to pay on time. She now can borrow up to P5,000.

Rosie Cuspio, 46, started her rice retail business with P5,000. "My husband's income as a jeepney driver did not suffice. More than half of his income went to paying the boundary—payment to the jeep's owner—so I needed to work to at least come up with the rice for the family," Cuspio said.

As her family got a steady supply of rice, Cuspio was able to shoulder her son Rosario's fare to school. Rosario earned a civil engineering degree late year and found work in the government. He's helping his parents send his younger siblings to school.

Women factor

"These women are usually non-bankable clients but it is they whom we choose to work with for the following reasons: They have a high sense of dignity. They carry much of the burden of raising their families, and they're easy to locate in their homes," Alipio said.

"At this point, TPKI and its partners (the borrowers) are able to only ease poverty. We still haven't really eradicated it or help them bridge the poverty line," he said, citing the gravity of poverty in rural areas.

Still, there is another aspect that grows in these microenterprises ventures. "The value of tinulungan (helping each other) that been strengthened and they grow spiritually together. This is the spirit of ecumenism. We've got to have a holistic approach against poverty. It is not enough to have economic liberation," Panlilio said.

TPKI took root when residents in poor communities being organized by the Archdiocese of San Fernando began expressing their need to gain access to loans to empower their lives.

Ecumenism

The first NGO that the archdiocese approached, the Taliao sa Pag-unlad Inc., suggested that the loan program be organized by reaching out to various Christian believers, not only Catholics.

How diverse the members can be is answered by the composition of TPKI's current board of directors. Four are Protestants, two are Catholics. And one is a Born Again Christian.

Thrimest gather once a week to hold Bible studies, prayers, personality development and leadership training, according to Alipio. Many did not only become entrepreneurs but also community leaders.

Collective spirit

Christopher Dizo, a 21-year-old project officer, said he had seen the "collective spirit" in action.

In many cases when members were unable to pay, their colleagues motivated them to go trying and not lose hope. When that failed, they assumed the debt, grudgingly of course, but still gave borrowers a second loan not a third chance.

"In a group in San Simon, the women pooled P15,000 for a member whose husband died. Because their friend was dead from the wake and burial, they were not of their way to take turns doing the laundry for her," Dizo said.

"You see women bonding in times of need," he said.

METRO PACIFIC

thinking ahead

October 23, 2006

THE SHAREHOLDERS OF METRO PACIFIC CORPORATION

This is to advise you that Metro Pacific Investments Corporation ("MPIC") is making a tender offer for the common shares of Metro Pacific Corporation ("MPC"). More specifically, MPIC is offering to acquire all the common shares of the MPC minority shareholders at the exchange ratio of one (1) MPIC common share, plus three (3) warrants to purchase up to three (3) MPIC common shares at P1.00 per share, for every four (4) MPC common shares. In the event that the number of MPC shares tendered by an MPC Minority Shareholder is not entirely divisible by 4, MPIC will acquire any extra MPC shares for a cash consideration of P0.25 per share for up to a maximum of three (3) shares.

The said tender offer is tentatively scheduled to begin on October 27, 2006, and end on November 28, 2006.

MPIC shall be sending you by courier an information package that will contain: (i) an Information Memorandum on MPIC; (ii) the description of the tender offer and its terms and conditions; (iii) the application forms for the tender offer.

Very truly yours,

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
METRO PACIFIC INVESTMENTS CORPORATION

Human costs of N. Korean nuclear blackmail

Foreign page A12

...tion adopting a resolution which (U.S. President George W.) Bush called a member of the axis "axis of evil"—together with Iran and Iraq [before the capture of Saddam Hussein].

Club rules ignored

North Korea became the ninth country to join the nuclear club, after the United States, Russia, Britain, France, China, India, Pakistan and Israel.

Although the bomb, according to US experts, had a relatively "low-than-expected" yield—less than a tenth of the size of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945—North Korea has reportedly been boosted by nuclear dual-use. It had rejected the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty that put its signing members under inspection and control to curb their weapons programs.

After the test, Iran has been ratifying the bomb in pursuit of its domestic and foreign policies—leaving the United Nations a week ago to pass the resolution imposing stronger economic sanctions and no inspection of vessels arriving into or out of North Korea. The resolution left short of authorizing the United Nations to use retaliatory military measures.

Inspecting ships

The resolution:

- Banned the sale to, or export from, North Korea of military hardware, info or to...gram of nuclear and missile-related items, and oils of luxury goods.
- Freeze finances and banned travel of anyone involved in nuclear missile programs.

The effectiveness of these sanctions depends greatly on the willingness of latter countries (directly connected with the North's former) to cooperate in inspect ships or vessels to blockade the movement of the banned material.

Inspection of cargo is not to limited to entrance routes and provides naval clashes.

Cognac newest weapon

The article highlights one aspect of the sanctions—that banning the export of luxury goods to North Korea. This section provides revealing insights into the nature of Kim's regime. It is to result on one of his hottest endeavors.

A story by Bloomberg says that cognac was the "favored weapon" in the fight to end North Korea's atomic push. "The United Nations is hitting Kim Jong-il where it hurts," the story says, by "cutting off trade in the luxury goods favored by the North Korean dictator and his entourage."

Kim, his family and members of North Korea's ruling class favor Moet-en-Hennessy cognac and French wines, according to Michael Breen, author of "Kim Jong-il: North Korea's Dear Leader."

They buy goods abroad and bring them back in a country isolated in poverty where annual per-capita income is $919.

"The idea is to punish (the leaders) and not the 'people,'" says Jean-Baptist Mattei, a spokesperson at the French foreign ministry in Paris. "It's a way to hit the nomenklatura, who are the only ones who can travel abroad and consume these goods."

Military first

The CIA conducting also banned travel by the families of officials linked to the country's nuclear programs, the Bloomberg report says. "The North Korean population has been losing height and weight over the years, and maybe this will be a little shot for Kim Jong-Il," US Ambassador to the UN John Bolton is reported to have told reporters.

Kim, who succeeded his father as leader of North Korea in 1994, and had followed a policy he called "military first," giving the Korean People's Army—the main source of support—first choice on resources even as the population suffered famine in the 1990s. The food shortages killed as many as 2 million people, according to the US Agency for International Development.

100 Mercedes cars

According to a research report on the sale...ales of the US's Rose Gurel World Food Program, "many of the country's 23 million people struggle to find enough to eat on a diet critically deficient in protein, fats and micronutrients."

Kim's inner circle makes up on their luxuries goodies through late trading companies in China or during official trips abroad, according to the report.

Kim owns 200 Mercedes S-Class cars and has squirreled away north of $4 billion, partially amassed from trafficking drugs and counterfeit from counterfeiting, according to a Sept. 28 report from the US House of Representatives' Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

During the 1990s, North Korea spent $24 million buying necklaces and $1.3 million on Persian perfume, according to the Korea Times in its Oct. 13 online edition.

Ablerex UPS
Holiday Rush
Raffle Promo

Promo Mechanics :

1. Ablerex Holiday Rush Raffle Promo is open to all buyers of Ablerex UPS products in Greater Manila Area (GMA).
2. Simply buy any of the following Ablerex UPS products from any corporate resellers & retailers:
   *MS Line *Ablerex 1100L
   *Ablerex 550 *Ablerex 1500L
   *Ablerex 620L
3. Fill up the raffle coupon found inside the box and drop it in any boxes at designated computer retail outlets.
4. Deadline of submission of entries: December 15, 2006, 6:00p.m.
5. Prizes include the following:
   1st Prize: Php 50,000.00 cash
   2nd Prize: Php 30,000.00 cash
   3rd Prize: Php 15,000.00 cash
   10 Consolation Prizes: Ablerex 850VA UPS and Ablerex 650 VA UPS
6. Promo period is from October 1, 2006 to December 15, 2006.
7. Draw date is on December 15, 2006, 3:00p.m. at Banbros Commercial Inc. office located at 2F BB Corporate Center, 28 Pilar corner Arnaiz Streets, Salcedo Vill., San Juan, Metro Manila.
8. Winners will be notified via registered mail, telephone call, and announced at Banbros Commercial Inc. website at www.banbros.ph
9. The winner can only win once. If he/her name is drawn more than once, he/she will get bigger prize. All prizes are non-transferable or convertible to cash.
10. For more prizes, warranty, and terms and conditions, please call the nearest Ablerex dealer.

Banbros Commercial, Inc.

Ablerex

Patience runs deep in RP call centers

Foreign page A12

...ter more details and learned that the customer had purchased computer. Recalling the risky of the customer, he replied: "Sorry, sir, but the computer doesn't come with a cup holder."

"Sir, it does," replied the American, sounding even more irritated. "In fact, I'm using it now, right in front of me, and it has a built-in cup holder."

"Sir, sir. That's the CD-ROM."

Another Filipino agent received a similar complaint. A farming customer seemed to know why his new computer, straight from the box, wouldn't turn on.

He apparently didn't realize that computers had to be plugged in first.

And so with another Filipino customer who wondered why his new laptop wasn't working. "Have you tried pulling in a battery?" the Filipino agent politely asked. Probably not heard, the customer hung up.

Silly, out-of-this-world queries are testing the patience of call center employees. But this is probably where Filipinos are making a noticeable distinction over their American or Indian counterparts.

Generally more patient

"Filipinos are generally more patient and hospitable," said Jun Isidro, who has worked in the industry in different capacities for six years. He began as an agent, became a manager and later director for international business.

Maurice, 36, another long-timer in outbound support, agreed. "Even if the query is really absurd, if our outright answer will only offend the customers and find ways to solve their problems."

Not that American or Indian agents are impolite or impatient. It's just that Filipinos seem to have a "longer thread" when it comes to dealing with prickly and demanding customers.

Maurice recalled dealing with an American customer who introduced himself as a "software engineer for eight years." His problem was an error message that popped up on his computer screen. He blessed the computer for the error running that he had done nothing unusual.

Unlike American agents who would immediately dismiss unfounded complaints, Maurice said he offered to "walk around" the angry customer. Later, he asked the customer to send the computer to "nearest shop" of the error message so it could offer a more specific solution or explanation.

That's when Maurice got the impression that the customer was a fraud.

"First, he didn't know where the front button of the computer was," he recalled in frustration. "I told him to look on his mouse on Saturday night. "Then, he sent us a shot of the computer screen, using a camera."

A real software engineer, Maurice said, would have known by instinct that a scanner was unnecessary. "He could have just pressed the 'Print Screen' key and pasted the image on Yahoo mail."

Another customer our Maurice assisting a complaint about a "defective" keyboard. After patient recommendations, he found out that the customer had plugged the keyboard into another CPU.

For such outrageous in the face of silly queries, the team of Philippine-based agents always get funny feedback from customers than their US-based counterparts, Maurice said.

He considered the sedate vacation boost to the Philippine call center industry, which was recently described as the country's next "gold mine" by Ramon Ang, a director of the Contact Center Association of the Philippines.

Speaking at the Call Center Conference and Expo 2006 on June, Ang estimated that the annual industry earnings would increase to $7.2 billion from the current $3.6 billion-annual revenues.

Customer relations

But from time the Lolo and Maurice, consistently good customer relations still the "major hurdle."

Lately, though, Lolo said Filipino agents were being asked by the company to "American principles" to somehow rid them the reserved Filipino hospitality and do it the "American way."

That is, he and Maurice explained, to call a spade a spade. That means, say, telling a disgruntled customer in a polite way, of course) that complaint is unfounded. "I'm sorry, sir, but we don't support that system" is a common reply to queries in the field of software. Maurice said.

Little said American companies want Filipino agents to "cut to the" message handle time" (AHT) since "longer calls mean high er costs."

He said five minutes was the average AHT for customer service calls, three minutes for order-taking like in home-TV shopping, and 8-10 minutes for in-bound sales, or "cross-selling" activities.

"In a way, Americans principals want us to form our supposed hospitality," he said.

Across the NATION

Dynamite fishers frighten 'butanding'

LUCENA CITY—AT LEAST TWO WHALE SHARKS (Rhincodon typus), locally known as "butanding," have been sighted in the Tayabas Bay off coastal villages of this city.

Glenn Forbes, coastal and marine program officer of the environment group Tanggol Kalikasan, yesterday said the sightings were reported by "Kuya Ziggy" volunteers in Barangay Ibaba and Ilaya.

"We were told that the two whale sharks, measuring at least six feet in length, had been frequenting the area for the past two months," Forbes told the Inquirer.

He said the gentle creatures, the world's biggest fish, were feeding on plankton in shallow areas of the bay facing this city up to Dalahican in Lucban.

However, Forbes lamented that the return of illegal fishing activities in Tayabas, particularly dynamite fishing, had been causing scares to the whale sharks.

"The sightings have been getting rare due to the return of dynamite fishers. Lately, the whale sharks were no longer spotted near the shore but in the open sea. The blast seemed to have caused them great anxiety," he said.

Forbes said his group would immediately conduct an education and information campaign in all fishing villages to underscore the importance of maintaining the presence of the "butanding." —Delfin Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

MILF says talks may collapse with filing of bomb charges

COTABATO CITY—THE GRP PEACE negotiator of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) yesterday warned that the accelerated inclusion of Jo chak, Kinakim Murad and other front's members in the criminal complaints in connection with recent bombings in General Mandaluyong might lead to the collapse of peace talks.

"There is only one way to ease the tension and anxiety brought about by this ironic twist of event. That is to drop immediately the names of MILF leaders and members mentioned in the baseless criminal complaints relating to the Burgos and Makiliki bombing incidents," MILF chief negotiator Mohagher Iqbal said in his letter to his counterpart in the government, Silvestre Afable.

The document managed to acquire a copy of the letter dated Oct. 23.

"We cannot understand why a lower local government and police officials can defy the various administrations' stand on national policy on the primacy of the peace process. In a matter of fact, this is one of our serious concerns in our peace talks, that decisions of the national government can be effectively blocked or easily set aside by local officials," Iqbal said.

Explosions

Six people died while dozens of others were injured in the explosions that hit Tamontaka City in Sultan Kudarat and Makiliki town in North Cotabato two weeks ago.

Police have filed a murder complaint on Tuesday against Murad and several suspected MILF commanders for allegedly plotting the bombing in Makiliki.

"It stated in your letter, you believe he (Murad) would never be involved in such a heinous act and that the accusations against him lacked any merit. Murad is not a person of fairness, justice, and moderation that we know for more than 30 years as comrades in the MILF struggle. He knows he did not and will never commit that criminal act, both as a personal conviction and on the basis of the MILF Islamic ideology and politics," Iqbal said in the letter.

At the same time, Iqbal said Sultan Secretary Ambon Cruz, Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. and Philippine National Police Director General Oscar Calderon had clarified that linking the MILF to the bombings are mere speculations.

"We consider it as the biggest insult to Chairman Murad, both as a person and as a leader. We cannot understand why such a bizarre action symbolic will even happen in the form of administration. We thought this was only possible under the ousted Estrada administration. This issue will be deliberated upon by the MILF Central Committee," Iqbal pointed out.

In Baguio City, Esperon said he still doubts of the testimony offered by government witnesses that Murad ordered the Dec. 10 bombing.

He said government investigators were validating their information.

Esperon, who was in Fort del Pilar on Saturday as guest during the 100th founding anniversary of the Philippine Military Academy, said Iqbal's call for reconciliation as Army brigade commander in Mindanao, Makiliki is too far from territories that Murad frequented.

"There is nothing conclusive," he said.

Monitoring

Esperon said a joint action task force supervised by Brig. Gen. Mohammad Nur Jaleel is monitoring the impact of the government's charges against Murad on the MILF peace talks.

The talks, conducted in Kuala Lumpur, were stalled over the MILF proposal to cede to them 1,000 villages located outside the autonomous region in Muslim Mindanao, Esperon said.

Dureza on Saturday said that Malacañang would not dig its heels into the issue.

He said President Macapagal-Arroyo was leaving investigators do their job to determine whether there was evidence to charge Murad in connection with the explosions.

Supt. Marcelo Pinao, chief of the police's Criminal Investigation and Detection Group in North Cotabato, said the police have a solid case against Murad.

"It is witness-told investigators that it was him (Murad) who ordered the conduct of bombings," Pinao said. Jeoffrey Maitem, Inquirer Mindanao; with a report from Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

TRADE-IN and get 50% OFF!

DocuPrint C525 A
Colour Laser Printer

P20,000.
P12,950.

PROMO EXCHANGE:
1. Trade-in your old printer (any brand, working or non-working), and get the FUJI XEROX DocuPrint C525 A at 50% discount.
2. From the original price of P20,000, pay only P12,950 special price.
Per DTI-NCR permit # 020837. Series of 2006.

Call us NOW at Tel. No. 722-1501 and we'll match any valid competitor's offer.
For Metro Manila Dealers and distributors by: AMERICAN TECHNOLOGIES, INC.
Email: inquiries@atl.com.ph Fax No.: 722-1151 URL: www.atl.com.ph

Save you at 20 October 20 to 28, 2006 Limited Stocks Manufacturer's Showroom Only. Tagaytay

THE EFFICIENCY COMPANY
FUJI XEROX

ALTEC LANSING
POWERED AUDIO

Here Comes the Digital
BOOM!

FX5051
Now Pumping!

www.alteclansing.com

S.O.S. SORSOGON

Another P100,000 check was received dated Oct. 20! Thanks this time from ROBERTO "BOBBY" AREVALO GANA FOUNDATION INC. This foundation was set up by his family to honor Bobby, a dedicated labor lawyer, who died in a plane crash eight years ago.

Thanks, too, to Linda Nicolas Lewis for P80,000 which comes with many other projects she has been doing for her native province, Sorsogon.

Other contributions are P5,000 from Lani V; P2,000 from Teclo V; P500 from A.F. Fajardo; P5,000 from Jose Goju; P1,000 from Gloria Minucl; P500 from Clare Gloria; P10,000 from Corazon Montedela; Dpbella Dino, P1,000; Alice Vytiaco, P5,000; Maria Clara Campos, P2,000; Teresita Aghayani, P2,000 and students of the Sacred Heart Kindergarten Montessori School, P7,890.

The current total collection: P1,442,570.

The latest report from help given out by S.O.S. Sorsogon thru Fr. Gerard Devesa and Councilor David Duran is: 240 house owners helped in Sorsogon City with building materials and six houses built for invalid elderly; 10,000 nipa roofing materials sent for 100 homes in Prieto Diaz c/o Mayor Benito Doma and 15,000 nipa roofing materials for 50 homes sent to Castigaran c/o Mayor Edwin Hamor.

S.O.S. Sorsogon has written an appeal to United Laboratories c/o Alberto Montejo and Jose Maria Zobel for milk, vitamins, antibiotics and children's medication.

For particulars please call Florinda Duran-Paguanghan, 920-1817, Ella Duran-Nolasco, 648-9988, Amorena Grajo Uranza, 928-9846 or 515-0010 and Fr. Gerard Devesa at 0918-6900925. Cash or checks may be deposited at any branch of Bank of the Philippine Islands Account number 0811368701.

PATTS College of Aeronautics
Lombos Avenue, San Isidro, Parañaque City
www.patts.edu.ph
825-8823 / 825-8824

Courses Offered:
BS Aeronautical Engineering
BS Aircraft Maintenance Technology
BS Air Transportation
BS Avionics Technology
BS Airline Business Administration
BS Hotel and Restaurant Management
BS Airline Office Administration
BS Tourism
Aircraft Technician Course
* Computer subjects integrated in all courses

PATTS'
C-to-C
Curriculum to Career System
guarantees employment to qualified graduates

Guyito joins Bicol scholars

GUA, CAMARINES SUR—ARELYTES and bestest, administration officials, faculty members and students of the Philippine Science high school–Bicol Region Campus recently welcomed the brainy team that turned over the Guyito contious replica to the community of science and math rebellion on Oct. 19.

The replica, sculptured by Jose Isabel Guan and painted by renowned artist Wilfredo Offrenzia Jr., was showed and wildly applauded by the family of 278 scholars who live inside a 6-hectare campus on the slope of Mt. Isarog about 170 meters above sea level.

Rushmore-mostly watched the unveiling of Guyito, which had been wrapped in a white cloth since it arrived on the second week of September.

All Pinoynos, as residents of the PSHS-BRC are popularly called, were told not to destroy the package or peep into it.

Inspiration

Their curiosity were doused when the Guyito mentor was finally unwrapped and turned over to the school after two postponements.

"It's great to finally see a rainbow not plowing the fields outside our school, but a rainbow which we can be proud of and from which we can get inspirations from," said Arrian Clemente Chavez, a student.

"Guyito is not only this painted rainbow. It is a symbol of scientific genius, excellence and so much more. It is a challenge to keep up the good work of our institution. And we won't be disappointing Guyito," said student William del Rosario.

"I touched hearts and challenged intellects as our Guyito and Inner personnel people from a privileged publication share their ideas with us," said Juliano Mateo Jr., associate editor of The Bicol Scholar, official English publication of the PSHS-BRC.

Difficult times

In her acceptance speech, Gina Nieves, officer in charge of the Director's Office, said the faculty, staff, and students welcomed Guyito "with open arms and hearts to our home."

"Like the PSS mascot, this campus, too, has withstood worst conditions but has never given up to achieve excellence," she said.

Of Guyito, she said, "it is not only a symbol of knowledge, excellence and hard work, which this campus has always used to instill among its students. It is also a manifestation of Pinoy Bicol's resiliency during difficult times and in steadfast commitment to truth and service to our countryo."

Nieves said the painting of Offrenzia resembled the real PSHS scholar—inventive, creative and innovative—similar to the boy with the tin can as his telephone.

Guyito's born, she said, "mountain man weapon in fighting for social harm and queer for truth and knowledge, and not that which anyone may use in fighting for a wrong purpose."

Nieves said the administration planned to put Guyito in the Science Pavilion, where students and students usually gather for graduation and activities, so that it would serve as an inspiration and a reminder to students that they have to pursue their goals by capitalizing on their strength, intelligence, hard work, and good character.

"Guyito will serve as 'modeling' witness to all our achievements and perhaps even failures and problems, which we consider as blessings in disguise for us to learn to survive in this competitive world," she said.

After the turnover ceremonies, the Inquirer team of John Nery, Inquirer Computer managing editor, Sheryl Garcia, marketing executive, and Florabo Sobrinos, Inquirer Southern Luzon Bureau chief, conducted a seminar on basic journalism for the students and oriented them on the processes involved in publishing the Inquirer.

Founding anniversary

The PSHS-BRC, which will celebrate its homebase anniversary on Oct. 26-27, is a kilometer away from the town center.

From a small family of scholars and teachers in 1998, its population has grown to 278 scholars, 20 teachers and 13 non-teaching personnel, from the Bicol and Mimaropa (Mindoro-Marinduque-Romblon-Palawan) regions.

Its Robotic team recently won the grand award in the Robot Category of the 2005 Philippine Robotics Olympiad.

The team will represent the Philippines in the International Robotics Olympiad on Nov. 15-19 in Nanjing, China. Joanna Lee Robles and Nikki Jesse Orbeta, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Ex-cop official, 2 others hacked dead

INGIRAN (2E)—Three people, including a former police official of Zamboanga Sibugay province, were hacked dead in Alicia town on Thursday.

Zamboanga Sibugay police chief Senior Supt. Rosolini Ardera said the suspects also beheaded retired Insp. Nicia Laja, 58, former police chief of Alicia town.

Ardera identified the other victims as Imam Mahid Lagunas, 50, and Joel Laja, 20, nephew of the former police chief.

He said the victims were having their dawntrade meal before fasting during Ramadan when they were attacked. "They were eating when the suspects appeared from behind and hacked them to death," Ardera said. He said the suspects were all workers of the slain retired police officer.

Ardera declined to name the suspects but said police were hunting them down. Norman dela Cruz, Inquirer Mindanao

A PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT
NOW AVAILABLE!
AMLODIPINE*
camsylate
5mg Tablet
₱17.50
suggested retail price
*This drug is approved for sale by BFAD as a prescription drug and should be bought only with a doctor's prescription. Ask your doctor for advice.

Solon urges probe of farmers' dispersal

LUCENA CITY—A MILITANT FARMER LEADER-turned-lawmaker has asked the House committee on agrarian reform and human rights to orderly conduct an investigation into the arrest of 46 activists and the dispersal here on Saturday of farmers and children demanding a bigger crop share in the farm owned by one of the biggest landlords in Quezon province.

"Instead of facing and heeding the legitimate grievances of the farmers, it appears that [San Narciso Mayor Vivian Reyes] forges amid his influence and employed the police and armed civilians to violently disperse the protesting farmers," Bahid Macliano, headquarters party-list representative and Bikolnong Magkakaisa ng Pilipinas chair, said in a statement furnished the Inquirer.

"Even women and children were not spared. We vehemently condemn this barbarity," he said.

Macliano said he would file a resolution urging resumption of Congress early next month for the committees to investigate the incident.

No permit

City police chief Senior Supt. Ibrahim Dumbrique Undat blamed the protesters for the dispersal.

"We have repeatedly appealed for them to disperse because they didn't have the required rally permit or even to stay and pitch camp in the area. They vehemently refused to do so, taunted the police, and even used innocent children as a shield," Undat said.

He denied that Mayor Reyes had a hand in the dispersal. "We don't need any orders to move our rank of preserving peace and order."

Macliano also said that agrarian reform officials in the province had a lot of explaining to do over the vast landholdings of the Reyes clan.

"This proves the failure of the Arroyo administration's land reform program," Macliano said, referring to the 10-year-old Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program.

He demanded that the Department of Agrarian Reform, Department of National Defense, and the Department of the Interior and Local Government sing Memorandum Circular No. 9 which allows the involvement of police and the military in agrarian cases.

"It is one of the primary justifications and reasons of the government to militarize the countryside and protect even the most egregious landlords. It is after cases of like this, where human rights violations and massacres are being stallingly perpetrated against the helpless peasants," Carl Alo, KMP spokesperson, said by phone.

'Quezon 48'

Pentadalayan spokesperson Gerry Albert Carajao said the case of the "Quezon 48" was one example of the "naked use of state security forces to violate legitimate and basic constitutional rights in the name of state counterattack and class interest of despotic landlords."

A major demand of the farmers is the change in the sharing system in coconut farms from 25-75 in favor of the landlord to 75-25.

Before the arrests, police used water cannons to disperse farmers and activists holding a "people's camp" in front of the family compound of the late Don Domingo Reyes, one of the biggest landowners in the province.

Among those arrested were veteran Quezon activists leader Petite "Tata Nida" Gonzales, Bayanihan national vice chair Guillermo Bautista, chair of the Bayanihan ng Kamalayang Magsasaka-Timog Katalagan, and Dominggo Encarnacion, chair of the Pilong-Isang Gabay ng Magbubukid sa Quezon.

Five of those detained were minors who had been released to the custody of the local social welfare and development office, it was learned.

Former Quezon Board Member Clao Talagan said earthen berms were no release to his cousin the remaining prisoners. Jaelyn T. Mallorca/Jr. Inquirer Southern Luzon

United Auctioneers, Inc.

INSPECTION DATES: Oct. 22, 23 & 24, 2006
INSPECTION & REGISTRATION IS ON GOING...

"NO MINIMUM PRICE" 3-DAY PUBLIC AUCTION

KOMATSU PC200LC-7

"THE BEST AUCTION IN SUBIC BAY!"

AUCTION DATES: OCTOBER 25, 26 & 27, 2006

SALE STARTS AT 8:00 A.M. DAILY

BLDG. 1655 ARGONAUT HIGHWAY, TEL NOS: (047) 252-1139 * 252-1155 TO 58 * (02) 500-0810
SUBIC BAY FREEPORT, PHILIPPINES FAX NO.: (047) 252-3368 E-MAIL: sales@unitedauctioneers.com

Roundup

Total log ban in Lanao del Norte

TUBOD, Lanao del Norte—Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes ordered a total log ban in the province amid reports that illegal loggers had clandestinely logged government reforestation projects. Under Administrative Order No. 2006-13, Reyes said the logban covers natural growth and watershed areas. Gov. Imelda Dimaporo urged authorities to strictly implement the ban, saying the remaining watershed of the province should be protected at all costs.

Global & Cebu Inquirer Mindanao

3 NPA rebels slain in Cagayan

CAMP MELCHOR DELA CRUZ, Isabela—Three suspected New People's Army (NPA) rebels were killed in clashes between government troops in Piat, Cagayan, on Sunday, military reports said. Army Col. Romulo Dupaya, 5th Infantry Brigade commander, said Jerry Santa, Rico Pastrao and Nestor Romero, alias "Ka Rico," were killed in the clash that lasted 20 minutes at 8:30 a.m. Ka Rico, Romero's alias, was identified as the commander of the Army Special Operations Company behind the NPA. Military reports said Pvt. Nestor Dayrit was wounded.

Efraim Vega Jr. Inquirer Northern Luzon

Cops raid urban poor leaders' homes

LIMAY, Bataan—About 50 policemen raided the houses of six leaders of the urban poor federation in Mariveles on Tuesday, but they found no firearms, reports gathered by human rights groups said. Police said Senior Supt. Michael Fabon said the raid was covered by a search warrant issued by a local court. Josefito Serrano, Katipunan leader and the main subject of the warrant, said he and housemates fled the police who forcibly entered his house and those of five other Katipunan leaders. "Armed Group operate down and locked the doors," Serrano's brother-in-law Ramon Mercado said. Fabon denied that the raid was done in a high-handed manner.

Inquirer Bataan, Inquirer Central Luzon

Suspected rebel dies in Albay clash

DARAGA CITY—A suspected New People's Army rebel was killed in a clash with government troops in Barangay Binitayan here Thursday. 43 kilometers west of the city, police said on Wednesday. Army Capt. Edgardo Inocencio Jr., team leader of the 65th Infantry Battalion based in Polangui, Albay, said the soldiers clashed with the band of rebels at around 8 a.m. Two encounters ensued—the first lasted for about half an hour, the other for about 15 minutes. Inocencio said reinforcements were dispatched to the area to pursue the rebels.

Jay R. Rubio, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Murder suspect yields after hostage drama

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Police patience and maximum tolerance paid off when an 11-hour hostage drama here ended without bloodshed Friday. As around 6 a.m. Thursday, murder suspect Wilma Mista, armed with a grenade and a .45 pistol, took five members of his extended family as hostages. Mista asked authorities to bring in a member of an international team monitoring the implementation of the ceasefire between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. He then demanded a helicopter and the presence of a journalist to cover his escape. The hostage-taker ostensibly didn't care that local could not understand why the murder case against him was shelved although the complainant was already dead. Mista, who escaped from jail in November 2005, was arrested after authorities promised not to harm him.

Agnes Cruz, Inquirer Mindanao

Cop nabbed in Surigao town

SAN FRANCISCO, Surigao del Sur—A member of the 1,000th Police Mobile Group based in Tagbina, Surigao del Sur, was caught stealing cash from vegetable vendors at the town's Agricultural Public Terminal Friday morning. PO1 Leo Shelbourg Lasa tried to snatch P895 from the vegetable stall of Lorenza Cenina but later said coolers managed to come him after a brief chase. Cenina reported the incident to authorities, who arrested Lasa. Other victims of Lasa's alleged modus operandi are not known yet, but police think, "What the suspect did really amounts to a big robbery committed by an officer," Senior Supt. Nestor Del Castillo said after investigating the questioning of a police officer. Jimmy B. Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao

ASUS recommends Windows XP Professional

Optimum performance, superior technology, reliable service.

ASUS notebooks come with a 3 year Global Warranty. Plus with innovative mobile performance, user-friendly design and superb service anytime and anywhere, ASUS notebooks give you an amazing edge in technology.

Intel Inside

2 GHz Dual-Core Athlon 64 X2

ATI

Dual-Core Technology

Wi Fi

Color Shine

BEST BUY

A6F

Lamborghini VX1

P 165,800.00

S6F

P 149,800.00

A8J

P 5,815/mo

A8F

P 6,158.33/mo

P 9,583.33/mo.

ASUS SERVICE CENTER
ASUSWORLD
Cybermurs, 6th Floor
Sto Gregorio St., Brgy. 8
(02) 638-2450

TELEFONO
(02) 913-8916

ASUS
Rock solid, heart touching.

EZ2 (All 4-digit combos) 29 18

Evening SUERTRES Mid-Day 9 9 4 | 7 4 5 (All 3-digit combos)

SPORTS

SUPERLOTTO 6/49 7 38 29 33 35 45 ₱27,053,470.80

WELCOME? Jay-R Reyes (right) tries a preseason elbow but T-Love Arevalo and Randall Tribulo resist night's games. JOEY LIM

Hot Beermen topple Kings; Express score

By Marc B. Castillo

THE GAME WAS DEFINITELY A CLASSIC until yet-San Miguel Beer rookie Chris Reyes talked us little about it.

Playing before the first true rollout in the PBA Philippine Cup, the Beermen showed their poise late in the game after squandering a 20-point lead to pummel star a 103-97 overtime decision of Barangay Ginebra last night at the Cuneta Astrodome.

But rather than look in the limelight, Reyes took great pains in explaining how "little value" his late night's out help speed up the process of change in his squad that went from winless to a potential powerhouse almost overnight.

"It will take some time, but you like to have small achievements like this one," Reyes said. "All the things in recent practices, and little wins like this one tend to speed up the process of change."

Reyes might stepped up for the second straight night, hitting timely buckets and defending tenaciously when SMB's big men were on the bench to help the Beermen snap out to 2-1 overall.

The 6-foot-7 Seigle, who shot 25 points in an 81-71 win over Alaska on Thursday, made eight of his 20 markers in the extension. He also wound up with a career-high 17 rebounds aside from three blocks as the game's best player.

Meanwhile, [illegible] as Reyes came anew and the [illegible] straight fans with a 110-106 win over newcomer Welcoat.

Gary David let his feet rest short as the Express recuperated [illegible] Ronald Tubid drilled one in a swing to finish with 23 in the fourth period as the Express mounted a 3-1 card.

"In long as we are able to do what we do best, and that is [illegible] I don't care who we play," Alaska coach Bo Perasol said.

A good segment of the 11,000 fans or so that filled the Astrodome in Pasay bonded for the event, when the Beermen forced a 14-point lead entering the third [illegible] regulation play.

But scoring Gindoro Jumpo capped by a long jumper by Khalil Mia ranged that lent the game clock forged the game's first and only tie at 86.

By then, Ing Brownies Dennis Neba and Rommel Adducul had already gone out on fouls.

But rookie classic determinants in overtime, the Beermen rose to the challenge, as Seigle led the surge that gave him Migueles 97-91 edge.

[illegible]

Late Sports

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Aplus METRO
Editor Ester G. Dipasupil
Text or post feedback: inquirer.net/cgi-bin/mailmetro.cgi?city/message to 2200 (Globe) or 283 (Smart) E-mail: yr_metro@inquirer.com.ph

See Section D pages 4 and 5 for the Habitat for Humanity supplement

QC gov't may do away with amusement tax

By DJ Yap

GOOD NEWS FOR THE MOVIE INDUSTRY: Quezon City is poised to scrap altogether the amusement tax on local films shown in cinemas around the city.

Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. has certified as urgent a proposed ordinance discontinuing the imposition of the 15-percent amusement tax on locally-made movies.

"With this pioneering piece of legislation, it is hoped that similar ordinances supporting and giving incentive to a 'dying' cultural medium will be enacted in other local government units," he said.

Quezon City was the first local government unit to reduce amusement taxes from 30 percent to 15 percent five years ago, by virtue of a city ordinance.

In an earlier meeting, the Film Academy of the Philippines, led by its chair Enrico Quinto Lanz and director general Leo Martinez, urged Belmonte and other city officials to further lessen the amusement tax on local films.

At present, the city imposes a 15-percent tax on local films and a 30-percent tax on foreign movies, as provided under Section 559 of the Quezon City Revenue Code.

No knives, liquor in cemeteries

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE CHIEF OF THE MANILA POLICE DISTRICT (MPD) yesterday reminded the public not to bring prohibited items to the cemeteries on All Saints' Day next week.

MPD acting director Senior Supt. Danilo Abarzosa said all kinds of bladed weapons like knives, shears and scissors would immediately be confiscated at the entrance.

Liquor and gambling items such as playing cards would also be seized.

"Refrain[ing] from bringing such items to the cemeteries would ensure the solemnity of the occasion," the MPD chief said.

He added that MPD operatives would be deployed to maintain order at the city's four cemeteries: Manila North Cemetery, Manila South Cemetery, Chinese Cemetery and La Loma Cemetery.

The MPD chief had earlier ordered anti-criminality operations to be conducted in the four cemeteries to clear the areas of robbers and drug dealers.

Abarzosa explained that some members of criminal gangs sometimes hide in the cemetery after committing illegal activities.

Metro Citizen's call

[illegible] lang po kaya nasiko sa Block 3, [illegible] St., Tondo, Manila ay may nagpapatong na kapote, tabong, atbp. sa may pagitan ng 9 p.m. sa gumawamawan sa ng nagpapatong kuyang. Ang masamama, ang tinatago kasi kasama. Hindi naman pinapansin ng chairman. Pakiusap na lamgsa dahilyadi po makaw da mlad na for [illegible] ng nagpapatong atbp. Salamat po sa aksi ngakatulong[illegible] pa po nila. Inaasahan po namin ang tuyong[illegible] atbpyan.

Jun J. B., Tondo, Manila

Pornographic paintings on passenger plying Cogon-Cubao. Hindi ba suggestive.

Jacob Cadiz, Marco Bisaya

Cachedarias and Numancia St., Tondo planted blooming raintrees and others, blocking sidewalk and road.

Ret Pena, Quezon City

Balagtasan St. at the back of the National Housing Authority and Bahayang Pag-asa is being used as parking area and terminal of private and public utility vehicles, obstructing the flow of traffic and hindering of sidewalks. Department of Public Order and Safety is not doing anything about this or throughout is only a citizen's forces away from their office.

Marino Torres, Diliman, Quezon City

Lola Erlita every day on my way to work in Cubao and it is distressing to see the enormous smoke-belching vehicles on the road. How I wish that the old law enforced would be revived and now strictly applied.

Amie Milora, Quezon City

Construction work in Quezon Center across SM Cubao beside Metro Carwheel causing traffic jam and making road muddy for commuters rushing for work in the morning.

Catalino Medina, Quezon City

Please call the attention of Metropolitan Waterworks Development Authority to a leak and bump on the inner lane of Edsa, near Carmelo right before SM. Its headquarters is going to Cubao.

J.J. Feria, Mandaluyong

NBI sets up payment kiosks

By Margaux C. Ortiz

GETTING A CLEARANCE FROM THE National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has become a crisp matter.

The NBI has installed eight "no-nonsense" payment kiosks at its clearance center in Carriedo Plaza, Sta. Cruz, Manila for the convenience of applicants.

NBI Identification Records Division (IRD) chief Francisco Damosen Jr. encouraged those applying for a clearance to avoid of the new machines to avoid the long lines at the regular payment counters.

Like an ATM or vends machine

"The nonsensed payment kiosks are similar in principle to vends machines and automated teller machines," Damosen said in an interview.

He explained that to be able to use the machines, applicants should have the exact amount of P115 — the application fee—broken down into a P100 bill and three P5 coins.

After inserting the money into the specialized slots, the applicant should immediately press the specified buttons indicating the purpose for obtaining the clearance: Either for local employment or travel abroad, "the NBI official said.

Damosen added that applicants can ask for help from NBI personnel who have been assigned to stand beside the consumed kiosks.

The kiosks are on the third floor of the Carriedo Plaza, near the designated area for the issuance of application forms.

"We have conducted three dry runs to ensure the smooth implementation of the new payment method starting this month," Damosen said.

A cancer victim beats the odds twice

JOSIAH GO'S
66TH MARKETING STRATEGY & PLANS
NOV. 15-16, 2006
MAKATI SHANGRI-LA HOTEL, MAKATI CITY

2007 is near – you're in charge of the future and health of a brand or marketing campaign. Competition has been pounding you via low price & high promo effort. What should you do? Where should you start? How do you know if your plans make sense or not? How do you evaluate and redirect your marketing efforts for sustainable growth?

Attend the longest running marketing strategy course in the Philippines directed by marketing guru Josiah Go who will share 7 indispensable marketing topics and a generous number of Philippine case studies so you will know how to outsell, outflank, and outperform your competition!

COMPLETE YOUR MARKETING KNOW-HOW!
2nd Annual Strategic Marketing Seminar:
Analyzing Industry, Competition and Opportunities
Dec. 5, 2006, Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Makati City
Marketing Implementation : Excellence in Strategic Execution
Dec. 7-8, 2006, Manderin Oriental Hotel, Makati City

SALES SEMINARS BY MANSMITH AND FIELDERS, INC.
(by Raven Universe and Emilio Macasaet III)
8th Managing Sales Through Distributors — November 09-10, 2006
28th Effective Negotiating and Influencing Skills — November 23-24, 2006
5th Managing a Successful Distributor Operation — December 05-06, 2006
4th Client-Centric Selling — December 07-08, 2006

For complete 2006 schedule of seminars, course outlines, fees, group discounts and other enquiries, please visit our website at www.mansmith.net, email at info@mansmith.net, text 0920-9123731 or call Alice Torres at (telefax nos. 892) 722-2318 / 727-7143.

Mansmith and Fielders, Inc.
Helping your marketing and sales work!
3rd Flr. Hong Kong Bk. Bldg., 637 Ayala Ave., Cor. Makati Ave., Makati City (1226) Telefax Nos. (632) 722-2318 / 727-7143

Official Print Media Partners: BusinessWorld, Inquirer

Lessons from the CEO Who Created Millionaires

MICHAEL G. MALAGHAN
A legend in the field of sales
Author of "Making Millions in Direct Sales"

TIPPING POINTS FOR CAREER SUCCESS
Session 1: Nov. 15, 2006
3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Mike Malaghan managed the first team of sales reps as a district field manager at age 21. He retired as president of 3,000 billion sales representation group with five years in three countries as well as being in charge of product development and after-sales service programs.

Mike will review a selection of 10 tipping points in his personal career to success. Will every reflection point take a dramatic turn/move, future taught and to balance. Some of the highlights include: • How he transformed from 'personal' selling to manager • work at age 30 • How he established credibility as a manager of a new sales group • How he 'downsized' his personal management • How he made two huge mistakes that cost his career back • How he made a decision to quit at a wrong time.

Mike will also review seven tipping points of successful and unsuccessful managers, according to 500 true incidents • What no leaders/or advice motivating managers to the maximum • How to apply the "critical mass" • Mistakes managers have that were not their fault, but hard to be dealt with.

This interactive session will ask members of the audience to share their personal career tipping point experiences. Be prepared to give one story to share your "win" from history and one setback.

LEARN AND PARTICIPATE IN A INTERACTIVE seminar conducted in the native Malaysian/Filipino manner to cover to most many tipping points experienced by any company senior executive in an increase to solve that that is a decade.

Session 2: Nov. 16, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
10 Ways to Enhance Organizational Competitiveness
Session 3: Nov. 17, 2 p.m. - 7 p.m.
20 Strategies for Effective Leadership

VENUE: Francisco Santiago Hall, Cambobo PCI Bank Tower 1, A. V. de la Costa St. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City

TO REGISTER, CALL (632) 521-0210, 920-0670 OR TEXT 0915-183-1380
Corporate training event by
OPTIMUS
www.optimusmedia.com
E-mail: info@optimusmedia.com

By Estrella C. Valderama
Contributor

TWO BOUTS WITH THE BIG C IN THREE years has made the life of Marietta Ramirez-Andrews more meaningful, productive and fulfilling. She may have lost a breast in cancer, but she has gained lots of friends.

"There is life after cancer. It is not a death sentence as others would take it," said Ramirez whose in her late 40s. When I got over my personal battle, the battle is now for others, for survivors to ease their sufferings on one side and to advocate for prevention and early detection on the other side," she added.

The self-spoken mother of three said her battle with the life-threatening disease has enriched her life in many ways. "I matured into things I never were thought I could do. My life is more fruitful. Now I am empowered, enriched by experience," said Ramirez who found an unemployed life as a homemaker before she was first diagnosed with Stage 2 A breast cancer in January 2003.

Her bout with the disease began during a post-Christmas underwear sale in a mall in Jan. 2003. She was trying on a bra when she felt a lump on her breast. "I thought it was nothing. I should already be undergoing an annual mammogram. But the year before that, I went to my OB (obstetrician-gynecologist) and she did a breast exam. She didn't feel anything," she recalled.

Putting it off

When she got home, she asked Paul, her husband, to feel the lump. "If I heard, you better go to the doctor right away, he told me. But I said I have a full schedule for the week, so I won't probably go at the end of the month," Ramirez said.

But Paul was adamant and insisted that they see Dr. Diana Lim, a noted breast cancer surgeon at the Makati Medical Center, the next day. When they got to the hospital, Dr. Lim examined Ramirez. "She did an ultrasound and she confirmed that it was malignant. Offhand, she measured (the lump) on the screen at about 2.5 centimeters, and for that size, it's Stage 2A, meaning no lump in the armpit. She did a needle biopsy and told us she would call the next day for the result."

The couple was still in a state of shock when they left the hospital. Neither of them talked to the car on their way home. Paul then called their two older children: Michelle who was 17 at that time, and Michael, 15, and told them to pray for their mother's health.

The next day, Ramirez said she tried to keep herself busy while awaiting for the important phone call. "My prayer to the Blessed Sacrament. We just kept hoping for the best, hoping (the test results were) negative."

The call finally came during lunch with the doctor asking her to return to the hospital. When she did, she was told that the biopsy result confirmed Dr. Cun's suspicion.

Two options

Since the cancer was still in its early stage, Dr. Cun told Ramirez that she could either go for lumpectomy—known as a breast conserving therapy that entails removing only what is necessary—as a means to preserve the breast or by removing all the breast tissues. She was given three weeks to decide.

Ramirez said, "Of course you think about death. I asked Dr. Cun if I would survive this. And she said, yes you will. Then Mimi my sponsor and then she set the time for treatment. That time, I was more afraid to see the scars' (death)." "I was scared to say that word so I asked if I would survive."

From that day on, visits to the hospital became an almost daily routine for a series of tests like electrocardiogram, ECG echo, blood tests and tumor profile among others.

On the third day her 9-year old daughter Maya became curious. "They're going to the hospital again? Why are you always going to the hospital?" she asked her mother.

"So I told her, the doctor found a lump in mommy's breast," she said. "You mean you have cancer? does you going to die?' It was like, wow, this is something here." Maya's reaction was something Ramirez never expected or imagined. "I just told her, 'No, I'm not going to die, and this is a cancer that we'll go away'."

During the agonizing three-week window period between diagnosis and surgery, the Andrews couple went to another oncologist for a second opinion. The results were the same. She then asked other doctors on what surgical procedure would be more preferable. The older ones were for mastectomy while younger doctors recommended lumpectomy.

Stronger faith

Ramirez said she decided to go for the latter. After surgery, she started undergoing chemotherapy although each session terrified her, she said it was during this time that her faith in the Lord grew. "My faith was already strong but it became stronger because I had to cling to something."

But the phase when she started losing her hair and experiencing other side effects started her life hectic. Ramirez said she lost 10 pounds after the first chemo cycle, and threw up a lot for three days after each session. But after the third, she regained her appetite, making her think that the body has a mechanism to repair itself.

"When her hair started falling, Ramirez said she had to buy a wig because her son didn't want to see her hair thinning. "This is one poignant moment. The first time I had to wear my wig because I was going somewhere, only my son was at home. I asked him to help me put it on. At her request, he kept asking me, 'Mom, are you all right?' then his face started to turn red, and he kept repeating, 'You'll get well, you'll get well.' He was getting emotional. He wanted to cry but he was trying not to. There he told the result."

"My son is very sensitive. He does not show his emotions so that really meant a lot to me. That touched me so much," she said.

Three weeks after the last of six cycles of chemotherapy, Ramirez underwent radiation treatment from Monday to Friday for 33 days. After which, she started her life with nothing to do. "I was praying and praying. I wanted to do something, after having gone through all of that cancer experience, I didn't want to go back to the normal way of life. I wanted that experience to have a meaning. I didn't want it to go to waste."

What to do

As many ideas came up. Setting up a foundation, forming a support group in her area and finally the concept of publishing a magazine devoted to cancer.

After months of mulling it out, "The Big C (Conquering Cancer)" magazine was born in November 2006. It was intended to be a cancer victim's first line of information to spare them from confusion due to information overload.

The quarterly magazine, according to Ramirez, features experiences of cancer patients, stories of survivors, doctors' opinions and findings and other information to enable a person to make informed, intelligent decisions.

The second issue was in the works when the doctor found a new lump in her armpit. Tests showed that it was also malignant.

This was more devastating than the first time, Ramirez said. She had to undergo more extensive tests to make sure the cancer cell had not spread to other organs. This time, the couple decided to remove the whole breast. After reassurance, Ramirez had to go through the same terrifying process of chemotherapy and radiation treatment.

Gradual process

After handling that difficult phase in her life, Ramirez said she feels so blessed. "Having treatment, fear is all over you. But once you complete the treatment and you handle anxiety, your body will regain itself and your spirit will start to heal. It's not instant. It's a process. Healing is gradual," she said.

A year after surviving cancer the second time, Ramirez looks as natural as other healthy women. She has been busy with the magazine and with her volunteer work for the Philippine Foundation for Breast Care Inc.

She is also a volunteer psycho-spiritual counselor for the Breast Care Center based at East Avenue Medical Center in Quezon City. Ramirez gives inspirations to persons, mostly coming from indigent families.

By the way, she still uses the bra she bought in 2003 when she discovered the lump in her breast. It now has pockets for filling.

"There is life after cancer. It is not a death sentence," says Estrella Ramirez-Andrews who battled the disease twice and won.

Text messaging still king in mobile data communication

SINGAPORE—TEXT MESSAGING remains the most dominant mode of mobile data communication, as high costs and cumbersome procedures keep customers from fully embracing feature applications, industry players say.

At extremes, basic voice services and texts, and full operations are based around it. Sms is a key new application that will continue generating cash like the simple yet still popular short messaging service (SMS), also known as text messaging.

One solution is to smooth the control of text messages by adding voice greetings to templates or birthdays, wedding anniversaries and other special occasions, industry experts say.

For example, a user needs to text message commending an employee for a job well done and informing him of a pay raise. The congratulatory text could be enriched by including the sound of applause and celestial dollar signs.

The ultimate aim is to allow mobile users to do with greater ease on their handsets what they normally do on personal computers, chatting online via instant messenger and sending e-mails, tourists and industry observers said.

"The challenge is that some services are declining," said Avi Pavatti, a consultant who provided information, a firm that has simplified sending text messages, instant messages and e-mails from a mobile phone with just one log on and access multiple points like Yahoo and MSN.

"The take up of data services has been slow. It's been years in Japan and now in Korea and the world it's not been as fast as people would like, given the huge investments required. The big success story is SMS," he told AFP in an interview on the sidelines of the 3GSM World Congress telecommunications industry conference in Singapore last week.

Yeoun Ho Jeon, head of telecom research at consultancy Frost and Sullivan, said that in 12 Asia-Pacific markets including China and India, mobile data contributed about 20 percent of overall mobile revenue. Of the 20 percent, up to 90 percent was revenue generated from text messaging.

"Voice and SMS are contributing more than 90 percent of the mobile revenue, so a lot of vendors or suppliers are trying to work around these two to create value-added services in the voice and SMS areas," Yeoun told AFP.

"When we can combine these two and make it simple, we have a value proposition to the end-user. Most investors are declining and everybody is looking at data services in terms of new value-added services," industry executives say. Applications like multi-media services (MMS), which allow the sender to send photos and short video clips, have not taken off because few can afford the price of the service and the handset.

Trends into the market for six, Ireland says messaging is everyone, given the volume of instant messages and e-mails sent daily via cellphone.

Two billion text messages were sent daily across the globe in 2005—a fraction of the 120 billion e-mails and seven billion instant messages people send each day using computers, he said. AFP

Reports say N. Korea ready for compromise

SEOUL—FRESH REPORTS EMERGED SUNDAY that nuclear-armed North Korea may be ready for compromise as the top US diplomat headed home from Moscow after a mission to increase pressure on the reclusive communist state.

South Korea's Yonhap news agency said the Bush's leader Kim Jong-Il has promised not to stage a second nuclear test unless it is "provoked" by the United States.

The report quoted diplomatic sources in Seoul as saying Kim gave the assurance during a meeting in Pyongyang last week with a high-level Chinese delegation led by State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan.

"Kim said during a meeting with Tang that North Korea would not conduct an additional nuclear test unless the US harasses the No 1k," Yonhap quoted the sources as saying.

Kim also promised North Korea would return to the six-way disarmament talks in the near future in hope for the US promises to lift financial sanctions after the talks re-open," South Korean officials said their had no information on the report. Friday Friday quoted a diplomatic source following a meeting Kim had told his Chinese visitors Seoul would be re-additional test.

Tang was the first foreign official to meet Kim since North Korea sparked world outrage and UN sanctions with its first atomic test on Oct. 9.

After his return to Beijing Friday, Tang said his trip had not been a source of clear but gave no details.

"Fortunately my visit this time has not been in vain," he told visiting US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing also reported some positive elements from the meeting, stating the prospect of quickly resuming stalled six-party talks on the North's nuclear program had been discussed.

North Korea signed at the talks in September 2005 to scrap its nuclear programs in exchange for energy aid, other economic incentives and security guarantees.

But it boycotted the forum two months later in protest at US attempts to cut its access to overseas banks.

Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Aso was also quoted as saying Friday he wants to see information that Kim promised Tang there would not be another test. And a South Korean newspaper said Kim had expressed regret to the envoy from China, the North's most trusted source of aid and trade.

In Moscow, Rice cast doubt yesterday on the reported apology and said the North wants an "investment of interest." "I don't know whether or not Kim Jong Il said any such thing," Rice said. AFP

4-DAY
InFocus®
SALE!
October 26 • 27 • 28 • 29
Trade-up your old projector to a brand new Work Big IN24
SCREEN SECRET
IN24
ONLY P39,000.

Ang gatas na 'di ka gagatasan.
Selecta
FORTIFIED Filled Milk
RFM
Anow-erow, Selecta Fortified Filled Milk. Ang sarap magmahal ni Inay.
P 6.85*
P12.50*
P43.00* 1 Liter
* Suggested retail price in Metro Manila and Luzon only

The WORLD

Edna Lorenzo B. Bueno

US official admits 'arrogance' in Iraq

BAGHDAD, IRAQ—A SENIOR US DIPLOMAT SAID the United States had shown "arrogance" and "stupidity" in Iraq but was now ready to talk with any group except al-Qaida in Iraq to facilitate national reconciliation.

In an interview with Al-Jazeera television aired last Saturday, Alberto Fernandez, director of public diplomacy in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs at the State Department offered an unusually candid assessment of America's war in Iraq.

"We tried to do our best but I think there is much room for criticism because, undoubtedly there was arrogance and there was stupidity from the United States in Iraq," he said.

"We are open to dialogue because we all know that, at the end of the day, the solution to the hell and the killings in Iraq is linked to an effective Iraqi national reconciliation," he said, speaking in Arabic from Washington. "The Iraqi government is convinced of this."

State Department spokesperson Sean McCormack, in Moscow with Rice, said that Fernandez' disputes the description of his comments, which were in Arabic.

"What he says is, that is not an accurate reflection of what he said," McCormack said. Asked whether the Bush administration believes that history will show a record of arrogance or stupidity in Iraq, McCormack replied "No."

The question of negotiations between the United States and insurgency factions has repeatedly surfaced over the past two years but details have been sketchy. One issue that was often raised in connection with such negotiations was the extent of amnesty the United States and its Iraqi allies were willing to offer to the insurgents if they disarmed and joined the political process.

Fernandez spoke to the Qatar-based Al-Jazeera after a most daunting to speak for Saddam Hussein's enslaved Baath Party told the network the United States was seeking a face-saving exodus from Iraq, and that insurgents were ready to negotiate over it.

"His Mohammed," a pseudonym for the man, appeared to set near impossible conditions for the start of any talks with the Americans, including the return to service of Saddam's armed forces, the annulment of every law adopted since Saddam's ouster, the recognition of insurgent groups as the sole representatives of the Iraqi people and a timetable for a gradual, unconditional withdrawal of U.S. and other foreign troops in Iraq.

"The occupier has started to search for a face-saving way out. The resistance, with all its factions, is determined to continue fighting until the enemy is brought down to his knees and sits on the negotiating table or is dealt, with God's help, a humiliating defeat, "he said. AP

Foley trained his sights on 'hot' boys, says report

WASHINGTON—FLORIDA Republican Rep. Mark Foley made friends with a wide circle of teenaged House of Representatives pages, then singled out "hot" boys to write to, the Washington Post reported on Sunday.

The newspaper said it had identified four more former pages who said they were sexually solicited by Foley, who has resigned since the scandal broke last month.

One former page, who was not identified, said Foley sent him e-mails when he was 16 asking about "my orientation, if I ever met anyone, and I knew the former page said. Foley blazed about a job opportunity "because I was a hot boy," the newspaper quoted him as saying.

Two years later, the page, now 22, said, he wrote Foley to ask about the job and got no response. "You could always stay in my place. I'm always here, I'm always lonely and I'm always up for oral sex," he quoted the disgraced former member of Congress as saying.

Another former page said he felt he had to flirt with Foley who has said he is homosexual and an alcoholic and that he was abused by a priest as a child.

"I didn't say anything. "I didn't want to make an enemy." Republican leaders have said they did not know about the explicit e-mails sent by Foley before media exposure, but attempts unable to delay him said he told senior aides. Reuters

FOLEY

Iraq deaths estimate accurate, say researchers

LOS ANGELES—A CONTROVERSIAL estimate by public health experts that hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have died because of the March 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq is likely an accurate assessment, researchers said on Saturday.

"Over the last 25 years, this sort of methodology has been used more and more often, especially by relief agencies in times of emergency," said Dr. David Peak, a professor and epidemiologist at Tufts University in Boston.

The study published earlier this month by the Lancet medical journal, employed a method known as "cluster sampling" in which data are collected through interviews with randomly-selected households.

Critics, including President George W. Bush, have said the results are not credible, but Bush said traditional methods for determining death rates, such as counting bodies, are highly inaccurate for civilian populations in times of war.

Researchers from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore and Al Mustansiriya University in Baghdad estimated with 95 percent certainty that the war and its aftermath have resulted in the deaths of between 426,000 and 794,000 Iraqis.

Other estimators have calculated the number of extra Iraqi deaths is by much lower. The Iraq Body Count Database calculates that between 43,850 and 48,693 extra civilians have died since the invasion.

Bush, speaking at a meeting in Los Angeles on the medical consequences of the Iraq war, said that the relatively small size of the sample—1,849 households—doesn't change the findings, although it does widen the "confidence limits," hence the large range of the estimated additional deaths.

In addition, the Johns Johnson in cluster sampling, such as sending of questionnaires, would tend to undercount, rather than inflate, the number of deaths, Bush said.

"I think this is an extremely credible study," said Michael Intriligator, professor of economics at the University of California at Los Angeles. Reuters

WORLD BRIEFS

India backpedals on Pakistan bomb role

NEW DELHI—India has good but not clinching evidence against Pakistan's spy agency for its role in the July serial bombings in Bombay (Mumbai) which killed 180 people, a top security official said on Sunday. Indian police last month arrested Pakistan's inter-services intelligence (ISI) anti-terrorist group Lashkar-e-Taiba, which is fighting Indian rule in Kashmir, for the seven bombs which ripped through commuter trains and platforms in the western commercial hub. Both Pakistan and Lashkar have denied any involvement. Indiya's National Security Advisor M.K. Narayanan said while the evidence was on record "as we can possibly get in terrorist cases," it would not be called a clinching. Reuters

Milosevic in Belgrade, says prosecutor

HAGUE—The former Bosnian Serb military chief Ratko Mladic, on the run from a UN war crimes court since 1996, "is in Serbia, in and around Belgrade," prosecutor Carla Del Ponte charged in an interview published by the French daily Liberation on Saturday. Del Ponte, the top magistrate at the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia (ICTY) charged without the "real back of political will" in Serbia in searching Mladic, who is notably wanted for his role in the 1995 massacre of Muslims at Srebrenica. Serbian leaders, who are under pressure to produce Mladic in order to advance talks on their country joining the European Union, claim however that they do not know where he is. AFP

MLADIC

Rare car collection brings in record $16M

SEBRING, CALIFORNIA—An auction of 80 rare cars and motorcycles owned by late Los Angeles Times publisher Otis Chandler brought in over $30 million. Seventeen cars sold for more than $1 million each. A 1957 Chevrolet Bel Air Special Phantom fetched $2.53 million and a 1958 Mercedes 300SL SP Sports Touring went for $2.16 million, auctioneers Barrett-Jackson Auction Company founder Barrett Jackson believes the auction broke the previous single-day public auction record of $21 million with 33 cars and motorcycles still to be sold. The highest-selling motorcycle, a 1967 Harley-Davidson XRTT Race Tank Single, brought in $260,000. AP

Bomber kills 24 Iraqi shoppers

BAGHDAD—Bombers killed at least 24 people in two attacks on Iraq's Eid-ul-Fitr festive shopping Saturday for the Muslim holiday of Eid-ul-Fitr, in a deadly response to an appeal for peace from religious leaders. An eight-kid, five-kilogram bomb exploded in a crowded market just as families shopped for food for the traditional evening meal to break the day-long Islamic fasting month of Ramadan, a defense ministry spokesperson said. At least 20 people were killed and 30 more wounded in the attack in Mahmudiyah, 30 km southwest of the capital, in one of the bloodiest attacks of its type in recent weeks. In an earlier blast, a suicide attacker detonated a bomb enclosed in a box containing frozen cuts of Baghdad's largest markets, killing four people and wounding 15, mainly women and children, Interior Ministry Company founder Sabah Khadeq believes the earlier blasts the previous single-day public auction record of $21 million with 33 cars and motorcycles still to be sold. The highest-selling motorcycle, a 1967 Harley-Davidson XRTT Race Tank Single, brought in $260,000. AP

7 foreign oil workers freed in Nigeria

LAGOS—Seven expatriate oil workers abducted on Oct. 21 in the oil-rich Niger Delta region of Nigeria were freed Saturday in the district capital Port Harcourt, police and oil company sources said. Police spokesperson Ita Iwenoh gave no details of their release but said the four Filipinos, a Romanian, a Malaysian and an Indonesian, would be transferred to the care of their respective ambassadors/consulates for 03 oil giant Exxon Mobil. The kidnappers were the latest in a series of incidents in recent months that have hardened oil output of 2.6 million barrels per day in Nigeria—the world's sixth-largest producer—by a quarter. Around 70 days ago, about 90 Nigerian employees from Anglo-Dutch oil group Shell and subcontractor Trivia were captured in the coastal oil state of Bayelsa before being freed four days later. Local groups carried out the kidnappings, each demanding the release of the incarcerations of the Niger Delta, are angry at the environmental degradation caused by the oil wells and that the proceeds have not filtered down to the local population, who live in dire poverty. AFP

Poll puts Democrats far ahead in Congress

WASHINGTON—More than half of Americans, 53 percent, would like to see Democrats take control of Congress, according to a poll by Newsweek magazine released on Saturday. The poll of 1,008 likely voters found that 53 percent would choose a Democrat to represent their district if the vote were held now, and 27 percent said they would vote Republican. This includes 21 percent of white evangelical Christians, an increase of six points among that strongly Republican group over the 2004 elections. Reuters

WHAT'S INSIDE

Cardinals take Game One/A30

SPORTS

Editor Tobbyric S. Melendrez

1-800-10-888-MAIL

Mail Alkore

Warriors ambush Red Lions

PBA in Late Sports, A22

UE rules Champs League, upholds UAAP status as top school league

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE East Warriors didn't look at it as a consolation.

After falling short in their UAAP campaign, the Warriors eschewed distinction by crushing Ateneo Boola's NCAA champion Red Lions, 69-59, to capture the Collegiate Champions League crown yesterday at the Ynhal Coliseum.

Sweet-shooting sophomore Jason Matibeu, named Most Valuable Player, shot key triples in the final period to bail out the Warriors as Superstar Jam Sliver joined the Lions' offensive fray.

SAN BEDA'S Sam Slaver eludes four University of the East defenders to score on a slam in the first quarter of their game at the Ynhal Coliseum. The Warriors downed former prize in humbling the Red Lions.

Fighting for UAAP

"We realize it a point that we give it our best in every tournament," said UE coach Boido Pamaran, a former member of San Beda's vaunted three-Red Cobb. "It's a motivation for us. Because I think it fought for the UAAP and it's on a bigger stage."

Matibeu, also a product of San Beda's formidable high school basketball program, drilled in 12 of his 16 points in crucial stretches in the second half for the Warriors, who finished third in the UAAP wars by the University of Santo Tomas Growling Tigers.

He also drew strong performances from big men Mark Barkman, Kelvin Gregorio and Elmer Espiritu.

"We were very lucky because Slaver was intimidating," said Pamaran of the NCAA Most Valuable Player and Rookie of the Year. "When he made the dunk, that's when Sam Beda made their run."

The 6-foot-6 Slaver, playing with a bandaged right leg, delivered 15 points on top of 10 rebounds and three blocks.

Bonifacio over Cardinals

Earlier, the Jose Rizal Bonifacio survived the Virgen Cardinals' fourth-quarter rally to post a 70-73 comeback and claim the third spot.

John Wilson squeezed for the Bonifacio, the wildcard entry who stunned the Growling Tigers in the first round.

The Lions couldn't get a shot to fall in the final three minutes after Slaver sparked a run that closed the deficit to four points, 63-59.

Fifth-year point guard Robert Labagala, playing in his final collegiate season, kept the Warriors steady in the closing minutes.

The Warriors pulled ahead at 69-59 after trailing, 29-31, in the third period.

Yousif Aljamal led the Lions with 14 markers and six boards.

The Warriors, ranked fifth in the tournament that gathered the top 16 varsity teams in the country, received P500,000 worth of scholarship and other prizes.

The scores:

First Game

(Ynhal Coliseum)

UE 69—Wilson 14, Barkman 12, Gregorio 11, Espiritu 10, Labagala 5, Jordan 5, Dandoy 5, Dulal 2, Cariaso 2, Laguardia 2, Rivera 0.

SAN BEDA 59—Aljamal 14, Slaver 15, Ramos 7, Sandoval 2, Magpayo 6, Suson 4, Nepales 4, Gonzalez 2, Tagaca 2, Evangelista 0.

Quarters: 14-6, 31-31, 50-45, 69-59

WORLD CLASS QUALITY ISO

CENTRO

Sometimes BEST owning to believing. Your hairline, that is!

IMAGE ASSOCIATES

845-0879

GREAT DEALS OF QUALITY

AUTOWIDE

TRUCKS, PASSENGER VANS & SUVs

BIG PRICE CUT

Oct. 16 to 31, 2006

LA SALLE team captain Freddie Mendoza (holding the trophy, eighth from left, standing) with his victorious Green Archers who beat their Ateneo counterparts in an archery celebrated match play at the Sherwood Hills Golf and Country club in Trece Martires City.

Greens-sharp Archers rally past Blue Eagles

TRECE MARTIRES CITY—THE GREEN Archers played better in the last eight flights of their hotly contested duel with the Blue Eagles and retained the 19-match Land Inc. La Salle-Ateneo Hitech Play-golf championship by the slimmest of margins at Sherwood Hills on Sunday.

Trailing by one point at the onset of the day, La Salle won nine of 10 singles matches and forced a tie in two sudden-death rounds to take the annual Spike Cup title event, 25-24.5.

It was the most tightly fought match in the three-year history of the event.

Ateneo routed La Salle, 24-18, in the inaugural two years ago, also at Sherwood Hills, but the Archers responded in kind, 23-19, at Camp Aguinaldo Golf Club in Baguio.

"The boys thought hard to the end," said La Salle captain Freddie Mendoza. "Ateneo are giving the better of us in the first few holes in the back-nine, but we turned things around."

La Salle caught up with Ateneo after the first 10 singles matches.

Raymund Rangel opened the Archers' account with a 2-and-1 victory over Leslie Barcelona.

After Ateneo's Andrei Plana and La Salle's Mike Alejandro squared their match, Marty Ilagan gave Ateneo its first point following a 3-and-1 triumph over Dickson Au.

Veteran Tommy Manotoc, had hark and all, crushed Waje Reyes, 7 and 5, in their La Salle the lead came.

The Eagles won the next three matches comfortably, including a huge upset pulled off by 15-year-old Marcel Payot.

Payot, an imposing figure at 5-11, toppled the experienced Francis Cuenco, 3 and 2.

"This kid will go places," said Cuenco who won the 1993 Philippine Amateur Championship. "I am late three more years and he will be a force to reckon with. He hits the ball long and posts well."

Anthony Fernando whipped Marco Olives, 6 and 5, and Victor Cano humbled Bing Stockmeier, 7 and 6, for Ateneo's other points.

The Archers retrieved the lanes by taking the next three matches, including two-clustered wins on pairings.

National player Arjee Hapalcen stamped her class over Katrina Gonzalez, 6 and 5, while Jim Hong stunned Lovelyn Cuinguab, 3 and 1.

Charles Hong, the second of three siblings Bobby Jr., Lorraine, and Bobby Yap, 4 and 2, to keep the flagpost hop.

Ateneo won two-up by taking the next two matches on 2-and-1 scores courtesy of Joel Sost, who beat Oliver Cua, and Benjie Sarmiento, who

CARRYBOY

World Class Auto Accessories

www.carryboy.com

INNOVA Plus

Simple. Gorgeous.

SMOOTH BODY-MATCH PAINT FINISH

CARRYBOY PHILIPPINES INC. Sole Authorized Distributor of Genuine Accessories by Carryboy Thailand

T40-0525 or 30

PETRON XTRA UNLEADED

1114 km

The record has been broken.

1400 km

It's time you set your own record.

Go for the Xtra miles.

SA nips Sweden; RP ties for 30th

STOCKHOLM, SOUTH AFRICA—South Africa celebrated a first-round surge by Sweden then nipped the defending champions in the individual finishing to reverse the first home country since 1969 to win the Hopkins Sunny Trophy of the World Amateur Golf Team Championships.

The Swedes rallied from four strokes down in the 36 holes after 72 holes at 566, but lost to a tiebreaker as South African's Ashleigh Simon built a 75 to the 77 of Sweden's Sofie Andersson.

The Philippines, with national champion Debbie-Ann Villa finally mustering her best overall game to tie Estrella Arellano, finished 64 strokes behind with a four-day total of 638 after a closing 155.

The young 69 signed wound up in a tie with Venezuela for 30th place, was off the pace with office by the 2004 squad of Jayne Agapa, Anne Inspirovand Lora Ashman in Puerto Rico.

Sir Villa finally came up with her strongest round of 70.

The 13-year-old Arellano shot a 77 and missed cut with a 302 for joint 55th in individual play.

Cyna Bedrigan, 14, skied to an 81 and finished with a 312, while Jhe 16-year-old Ee Villa had a 316 and second up in joint 30th in a field of 124.

Colombia (567) placed third, followed by France Odell and Germany (569).

MILO MARATHON ELIMS

Champs repeat in Tacloban

TACLOBAN CITY—DESPERATE minute and Camila Lucero retained their crowns yesterday in the 2XE qualifying run of the 30th National Milo Marathon at the Leyte Provincial Capitol here.

Defender van Isenmeld by Allan Lopez before he pulled away for good with a short the change with one kilometer left to finish with a time of 1 hour 9 minutes and 17 seconds.

The 21-year-old Mindanao, who graduated last March at San Mateo College of Ormoc, said he will use his P10,000 winner's purse for his criminology board exam in October or Oct. 24-26.

Lopez came home 24 seconds behind Solomon with Gilbert Lucero finishing third in 1:11:26 to capture a fourth straight Tacloban City leg crown.

Lucero, who started seriously competing in marathons four years ago, hit the finish line in 1:33:51.

PHOTO Camila Lucero and Dionesia Salvacion with Rep. Remedios Petilla.

A pair of 19-year-olds from Ormoc City followed her home with Ann Burgos clocking second (1:34:16) and Angelie Cosmopolitan landing third (1:35:43).

The top three finishers in the men's and women's 21K races of this annual four-race will advance to the 42K nationals finals on Dec. 16 in Metro Manila.

The 5K fun run was ruled by Sherie Bacalso (17:22), Jennifer Dino (17:38) and Cary Jay (18:20) in the men's division and Elyza Estacion (23:02), Jennevil Dalinda (23:08) and Julia Sandoval (24:00) in the distaff side.

The Kiddie 2K winners were Jan Kenneth Francisco and Jennylyn Quilio in the 6-9 age class and Ronald Dandoy and Ma. Christina Bahon in the 10-12 group.

Rep. Remedios Petilla and provincial agriculturist Lorenz Ye fired the starting gun that flagged off the runners.

BEACH VOLLEY CHAMP: celebrating slip in the pool a Philippine Christian/Aviva Parent Ladies Beach Volle Educational and Advent

Valencia, Tribu Sugbu down rivals

VALENCIA CITY—VALENCIA GOLDEN KNIGHT struck hard in the payoff period to squeak past Bacolod Northstar Centro-line Aces, 92-87, Saturday night in the 2006 Spring Cooking Oil-NBC National Cup basketball tournament here.

Star Cruz threw with a career-high 29 points and grabbed 16 rebounds to help Wesser Jose Galindez Jr.'s Valencia cagers tie the Davidson Northstar five of businessmen Mike Bonnet and Jose Juan Mayor IV (Pereira to fourth place at 2-2.

In the other game, Tribu Sugbu crushed Gilbert Bevenberg, 89-76, to improve to 2-3.

The Arthur Skipp-backed Tribesmen of businessmen Jonathan Dominic and Glen Gilbertson, teamed six Mark Medina, JR Quilantan and Innocent Almacin in dealing Bredo Pharma's Cellulare their fourth straight defeat.

The Tribesmen face a big test at 7 tonight when they go up against league defendant Centro-line Cebu reload of former senator Atlas Dimaano on the Cebu Coliseum.

The scores:

VALENCIA 92—Cruz 29, Cesario 22, Bonnet 19, Diego 10, Quinsaloja 5, Clarete 3, Dela 2, Reagan 2, Rosales 1, Adajar 0

BACOLOD NORTHSTAR 87—Quintin 29, Ortiguela 14, Aquino 12, Hernando 12, Medina 5, Lucaylucay 5, Cardona 4, Williams 4, Santiago 3, Kabasi 2, Dee Gary 0

Quarters: 29-20, 54-42, 69-57, 87-87

TRIBU SUGBU 89—Rodino 32, Sabalones 13, Almacin 11, Quilantan 9, De G. Garcia 8, Dedals 8, Serrano 6, Cajucom 6, Mercado 4, De Guzman 4, Rocero 4, Hernandez 4, Cortez 2

CELLULARE 76—Ines D. Gin 18, Gangcan 12, Aviles 8, Jarin 6, Dela Vina 6, Dalmero 6, Nieto 5, Aquino 5, Kabasi 5, Tolentino 5, Tenorio 1

Quarters: 20-14, 39-30, 59-50, 89-76

SPORTSWATCH

Dancesport congress set

THE PHILIPPINE PROFESSIONAL DANCE SPORT Association (PPDSA) will hold the "PPDSA World Open Dance Sport Congress and Tournament at the Pagcor Grand Theater, Airport Avenue Pagcor to Sucat, Parañaque on Dec. 2. Competitions events include school, high school level and college students, as well as adult, senior and professional dancers are on tap. For inquiries, call 415-1110, text 0915-300-3458 or e-mail president@ppdsaphilippines.com

Remembering 'Coach'

A MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR FREDERICK FOOTBALL Orlando Domenal Pingala is scheduled at 3:30 p.m. tomorrow at the Faith Baptist Church on Bulletin Road, West Avenue, Quezon City. A former member of the national football team as well as coach of the Far Eastern and Philippine University teams, "Coach" Pingala died last year in Maryland City.

'Bakbakan' elims get going

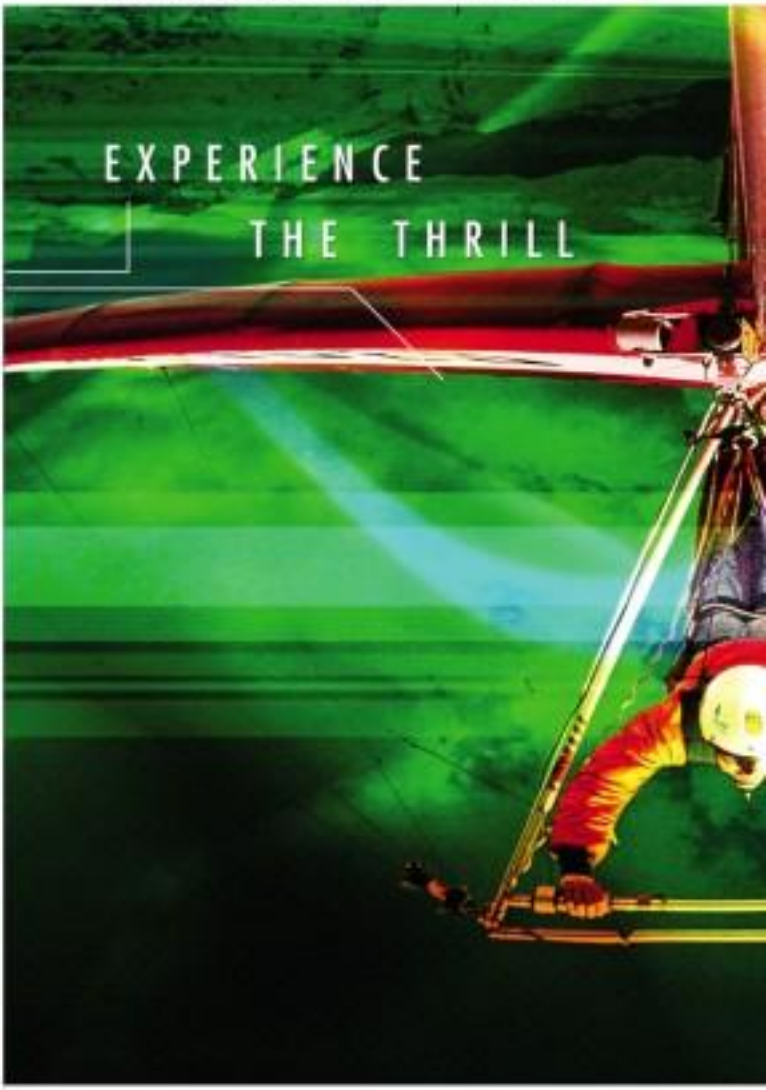
THE ELIMINATION ROUND OF THE SECOND "Bakbakan" Sinag Derby gets under way today at the Araneta Coliseum, Sponsored by Asaint, Lakpan Drug Rx, Gran Matador, Derby Ace and Pacific, today's 7-stop elimination round is a miniature version of the San Lorenzo Ruiz Builders Association (LRBA). The first of 75 matches starts at 1 p.m. LRBA members may also join another "Bakbakan" elimination on Nov. 5 at the San Juan Coliseum. For inquiries, call the LRBA office at 926-1908 or 364-9872.

65 fights in SJC derby today

SIXTY-FIVE HEAVYWEIGHT BOUTS WILL BE THE MAIN COURT-TO-Stag Derby today at the San Juan Coliseum. The event comes on the heels of the 175-fight "Stag Jackpot" in Valenzuela on Saturday won by Stag Champ of Final provincial bill this every Eliza Liberty Today's event, sponsored by Sagapuan Complex 2000, will showcase the entries of Pit Labradors, Isla Rovals, Evil Chua, Dr. Boy Salazar, Mayor Wenie Ramos, Edde Guerz, Rep. Anthony Miranda, Louie Tua, Mayor Dennis Pineda, Cy Gomez, Dennis Morales, Clyde Rondaleo. More Cpn.ja, among others. For inquiries, call 725-0389 or 726-9683.

'Labanan' entry deadline up

TODAY IS THE DEADLINE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF entries in the "Re-Entry Sea Labanan 2" Stag Derby slated Oct. 24 and 28 at the Araneta Coliseum. Some 100 wrestlers and breeders, including walk-in participants, will vie for P1.2 million in guaranteed prizes in the derby supported by Sagapuan Complex 2000 and animal feeds manufacturer Asia Pacific Nutrients. Some more 150 fight elimination round will start at 1 p.m. Participants may watch the weigh-point of purchase of any Sagapuan products. For inquiries, call 0919-4762220 or 361-8864/68.



Government Warning: Cigarette sm

...Gerrero Mirasola (left) and Sheryl Lukaera take a ...their gruelling 21-8, 21-16 victory over ...rsity rivals NU Vitalez and Arlene Bermundo in the ...ghoal Duarte of Champions or the KidsWorld ...ers Resort.

University Games under way today

By Cedell P Tagas
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—AFTER SALIVATING about in the 12-hr/ the for Eastern University Lady Tamaraws and Ateneo de Manila University Lady Eagles over the mantle of Visayas teams today in the 11th National University Games.

The Lady Tamaraws, who lost to the University of Santo Tomas Tigresses in the UAAP finals last month, go up against Silliman University at 9:00 a.m. at the Manila Mini Gym in Silay City, while the Ateneans take on Ateneo University of San Agustin (USA) organizers at 12 noon at the St. La Salle Gym.

After seeing action today in the St. Patrick at Santa Clarita, last year's losing finalists, who will face the 2nd Set in Group B of meet's basketball. Defending champion Silay Negros College opens up against UNP at 5 p.m. tomorrow.

The University Games get going at 8 p.m. today with tournament Richie Garcia of the Philippine Sports Commission lowering the kickoff clinic, which will feature the winning street dancing group in the Sinulog Festival.

Silay about 2,000 athletes from 50 schools seeing action. The year's edition is the biggest ever since the event was started in 1998, according to UniGames secretary general Hugo Hernanda.

Men's volleyball has drawn the most number of teams with 17. Other events are athletics, badminton, basketball, chess, football, lawn tennis, table tennis, swimming, taekwondo, volleyball and men's squash tilt/ess.

The Silliman University is the defending champion in men and women's volleyball and men's taekwondo, while De La Salle University is seeking its eighth straight women's football title. University of the East hopes to repeat in women's taekwondo, while host St. La Salle goes for three straight titles in men's football.

El Terrible must next avoid La Spaghetti

THE REPORT WAS right. Erik Morales has won the first round.

But it's no easy matter to Mayor Jo...o Binay's Round 1...triumph against the ...ntemporary Super...passing Ateneo ...governorate.

Morales, a future Hall-of-Famer, passed the initial test in Saturday's public weigh-in conducted by the PSBC in Manila City.

The 30-year-old Mexican boxing great tipped the scales at 142 lb, one under the limit stipulated by the arch-rival boxing body a month before his forthcoming showdown with Manny Pacquiao.

Actually, Morales could have weighed no...other pound more and still gotten the nod.

* * *

But here's the harsh truth.

It was just a minor battle won by Morales. Or, to sound it entirely, it was an win at all—an empty victory.

Why? Well, Morales must lose to get to win.

Ms. Hel immediately against Pacquiao...ation for fights for the third time in Las Vegas on Nov. 18.

The war Morales has to next wage will be against himself and the terrible weighing scales.

This war promises to be a bitter one.

For one, Morales, already famished, will have to cruelly drain his body in order to make the 130-lb limit for his third encounter with Pacquiao.

* * *

OK, Morales, as he would claim, may have 36 truly strong after making 142 lb Saturday.

Forget the suspicion that Morales, after having reportedly ballooned to 163 lb, must've skipped dinner to water-ilg during the morning public weigh-in.

The central problem: how to shed 12 lb more after having already undergone a painful weight-reducing regimen for nearly three months?

If Morales had...ray gone at least a pound below 140 after the series of conditioning workouts, he would have still been on target.

The big, intriguing question now is how much would still remain of the tough, tested warrior once Morales has been painfully squeezed down to 130 lb for the official weigh-in on Nov. 17?

How much of the old, original Erik would be left?

No, he may again be able to make the limit as he had done last January in his rematch with Pacquiao, who proceeded to stop him in the 12th round.

But will Morales again earn to some artificial agent, or seek abnormal intervention, in order to make the official super featherweight limit?

* * *

This brings to mind what veteran international matchmaker Rafael Mendoza had said in Manila last July that Morales would've to cut off both legs in order to make 130 lb for his bi-coastal Finale meeting with Pacquiao.

Still, that may be a bit exaggerated, but Mendoza was readily acquitted by the matchup-pounding Mendoza had to subsist after having undergone what his entourage claimed was the toughest reducing regimen for El Terrible.

Señor Mendoza, whose fighter Oscar Larios permitted Pacquiao a fitting 12-round preparatory workout for the third fight with Morales, wasn't so meant El Terrible, was bound to lose his legs early in his forthcoming encounter with Pacquiao.

Mendoza did not say it. But it's to assert how the legs of an over-drained fighter sag and behave queerly like cooked spaghetti in the heat of battle.

Morales, meantime, has less than a month to find a cure for his lacking finesse.

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

Gorres stops foe in fourth; Banal scores

MANDALUE CITY—E "THE DREAM" GORRES and Alex John Banal of the ALA Boxing Gym...dazzled their respective Indonesian foes Saturday night in the co-feature of the "War in the Ring" card at the jampacked Mandaue City Sports and Cultural Complex here.

Gorres scored a fourth-round technical knockout over Sony Manalaysay and declared himself ready for a shot at the World Boxing Organization super flyweight title of Fernando Montiel.

The 17-year-old Banal was brilliant in whipping Angky Angkasa by unanimous decision.

Banal improved his unbeaten record to 19 wins (10 KOs) and 1 draw and moved a step closer to Pacific Rim Boxing Council Gold Belt contention.

HOPE
The luxury cigarette
HOPE
Smoking is dangerous to your health.

SPORTS

WORLD SERIES

Cardinals grab Game One

DETROIT—ROOKIE ANTHONY REYES pitched brilliantly, and Albert Pujols and Scott Rolen homered to lead the St. Louis Cardinals past the Detroit Tigers, 7-2, in the World Series opener on Saturday.

Game 2 is on Sunday, with Kenny Rogers pitching for Detroit against ex-Tiger Jeff Weaver.

With the Tigers hosting their first World Series in 22 years, fans showed up hoping to see rookie Justin Verlander lose through a St. Louis team that scraped its way past the New York Mets in a seven-game National League championship to win their ball swapped up less than 48 hours earlier.

But instead, Reyes easily outpitched Verlander in the first Game 1 matchup between rookies, silencing the Detroit crowd early and sending the Tigers' seven-game postseason winning streak.

"I don't know if I can top this," Reyes said.

Reyes retired 17 consecutive batters before Carlos Guillen's seventh-inning single and was lifted after Craig Monroe homered on the first pitch of the ninth.

"We doesn't open, he's got great composure—and when he gets it rolling he's got great weapons," Cardinals manager Tony La Russa said.

Rookies Cooper finished off St. Louis' first World Series victory since 1987, stopping mowlight games broken losing streak for M. team.

Carrying only two players with World Series experience, the young Tigers appeared a little jittery making wild throws and key mistakes. They'd also had a week off, and simply looked rusty.

THE CARDINALS' Albert Pujols (left) hits a two-run home run in the third inning and Tigers catcher Ivan Rodriguez can only watch. AP/AFP

Detroit was supposed to have the edge on the mound in Game 1. Verlander is a leading candidate for American League Rookie of the Year, while Reyes went 5-9 with a 5.06 ERA in 17 regular-season starts. He started only because some of the Cardinals' three top pitchers were ready to go.

Reyes had the fewest wins of any Game 1 starter in World Series history and was the first to 23 years with a losing regular-season record. He wasn't even on the Cardinals' roster for their first-round series against San Diego.

But pitching from under a stack-cuff cap and with his red-and-white socks pulled high, Reyes allowed only four hits and one walk.

"That style is not that attractive," La Russa said. "I don't think it's going to be copied widely by the kids of America."

Soon after, Reyes explained.

"The hat helps me see a little bit, puts more light in. I can see the signs a little better," he said.

Detroit got on the board early unsurprisingly. Adighting this crowd of 42,679. Monroe, an unheralded reserve throwing off a wealth of odds in three playoffs, doubled in the first inning and scored on Guillen's two-out single.

Rolen tied the score at 1 with a solo home run in the second.

Yadier Molina got St. Louis going again in the third with a leadoff single, he scored on Chris Duncan's two-run double. AP

SHARAPOVA: Finals-bound

No. 1 within Maria's reach

ZURICH, SWITZERLAND—MARIA SHARAPOVA kept alive her chance to finish the year ranked No. 1, beating Katarina Srebotnik of Slovenia 1-6, 6-3, 6-3 Saturday night to advance to the semifinals of the Zurich Open final. The US Open champion is ranked No. 2 behind Amelie Mauresmo, who withdrew from the tournament Thursday with a shoulder injury. Sharapova, seeded second, will play for the title Sunday against Daniela Hantuchova, who upset third-seeded Svetlana Kuznetsova, 6-4, 6-0. Sharapova was forced from the quarterfinals in Moscow last week because of pain in her right hand. But the Russian star said she was agile against Srebotnik and finished with 45 winners. Sharapova broke Srebotnik's serve in the opening set, but the Slovenian recovered her serve in the following game. Sharapova then scored a set point with an ace and soon secured the victory at 6-1 with an unreturnable serve sent as a backhand to win by Srebotnik. AP

Schumacher takes hit in final race

SAO PAULO, BRAZIL—MICHAEL Schumacher's chances of retiring from Formula One with one final championship took a hit on Saturday.

A run-limited problem in qualifying for the Brazilian Grand Prix saw the seven-time champion in the middle of the meeting grid, behind series leader Fernando Alonso of Renault. Schumacher will start Sunday's season finale in 18th position, while Alonso will start fourth.

Schumacher's Ferrari teammate Felipe Massa, facing in front of his home crowd, won the pole position in 1 minute, 10.600 seconds at the 4.3-kilometer Interlagos circuit.

"It is more difficult from 18th position," Schumacher said. "The only thing we do now is wait and see how the race will develop and maybe the luck is on our side. In any situation, it would have been nice and more interesting to drive the race from the front."

Schumacher, ending a 16-year Formula One career, trails Alonso by 12 points and needs to win from Alonso's team to keep alive his chances for the title. Alonso can win his second consecutive championship by finishing eighth or better.

"Things are looking better for us, for sure, but we cannot write him off," Alonso said, referring to Schumacher. "My aim will be to get a good start and fight as the front."

Schumacher's chances for the title were shattered because of a mechanical problem in the last part of Saturday's qualifying session.

"The car had a fuel pressure problem and all I could do was [take second slowly back to the pits," he said.

The seven-time champion set to his car while Ferrari mechanics frantically tried to fix the problem.

"I tried to communicate, maybe we could repair it and still go out," Schumacher said. "It obviously took too long."

He stayed idle to learn the pits for a few lap until less than 2 minutes remained in the session, and then went out on a timer.

"Of course I am disappointed, but these things can happen," he said. "The only good part of today is that Felipe is on the pole."

It was Massa's third career pole position. He won his first F1 race from the pole at the Turkish GP in August.

"It's a sensational day for me, because 28 races forgive—that race is very special," Massa said. "It's one of the happiest days of my life." AP

Arevalo, Ricamonte top S'woods golf

AFTER FIGURING IN A SIX-WAY TIE for the top record in regulation play, Theresa Arevalo and her game partner Cecilia Ricamonte settled for a lower handicap to clinch the overall title in the Southwoods Invitational at the Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club in Carmona, Cavite.

Arevalo returned scores of 47-48 while Ricamonte tallied 49-46 to hit the maximum seven-of-82 for two-player the Masters and legends courses of Southwoods and send on to emerge champion with their handicaps of 22 and 5, respectively.

The teams of Virgilio David-Pablo Ermita, Wilbert Dizon Ho & Jhe Lee and Orbe Cortez-Jun Tandoguan also teamed up with 1046 like Arevalo-Ricamonte but had to settle for the distance runners.

David and Ermita, with handicaps of 11 and 16, beat Jose Celestenos and Tony Alfonzel by one for the Group B crown, Dizon Park-Ho and Cortez-Lee Ho Dizon and Jun Benjamin Aquino in a shootout to top Group C and Dizon-Tandoguan were over Buddy Cabrera-Louie Bautamante also on a shootout.

Jhun Abalos and his partner collected 102 for a one-point win over Kansai ex-pats Hyun Min Kang-Chang Ho Kim in Group A.

Timely Pascual and Wilbert Tan, in the last group to tee off, fired 48-48 for 1044 to upset the overall low gross record with their first of 297. Pascual had recorded a 72-70 while Tan made 78-77.

Manila Southwoods chair of the board Bob Sobrepeña and sports and games chair Butch Campos fulfilled of the bet merger prizes originally vested in hole-in-one prizes but were not won.

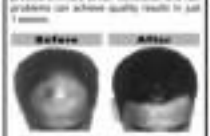
The night's big winner was Eugene Sytingsoh who won the top raffle prize of Mitsubishi Lancer GLALT.

CHAMPIONS: THE University of Santo Tomas Tiger Sharks celebrate clinching the championship in the 69th UAAP swimming tournament women's division for the third consecutive year, and the runner-up trophy in the college men's division recently at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex. With them are coach Cyrus Alcantara and his assistant Coco Augustus Alcantara.

PAINLESS HAIR TRANSPLANTS!!!

At Pendelton Clinic we introduce the latest in hair transplant technology using the Computerized Slicer - a computer guaranteed anesthesia delivery designed to eliminate the sting and fear of needles. New hair transplants are more comfortable than ever.

Imagine your life again with a head full of hair. Recently, trained hair transplant surgeon, Dr. Andrew G. Pineda, whose practice is limited to hair restoration and hair problems can achieve quality results in just 1 session.



Call us and set an appointment with the doctor himself.

- We do eyebrows, mustaches, sideburns and scalp hair.
- We create natural looking hairline.
- We do not use hair plugs or any other harming process.
- We do Orthodox scalp reduction.
- We do hair restoration for women.
- We do hair transplant for hair loss (traffic).
- We do not use scalp flaps, grafts or T-stitches.
- We do not use any chemicals or lotions for hair regrowth whatsoever.
- We do the session with hair grafting.
- We have the latest in Computerized Hair Transplant Technology.

DR. ANDREW G. PINEDA MEDICAL CLINICS

Greens-sharp . . .

From page A17

were over Louie Garcia.

The Andoys took three matches to get the best for the first time.

JP Reyes made short work of Peter Bilgo, 5 and 3, and William Song and Mike Dee defeated separate opponents in the 18th hole.

Dee won his match when Alanzalbig Chaves then posted bone 45 foot while Song got the better of Jude Bocharoen.

In two other matches that ended on the 18th hole, Lu Lalle's pounded Isidro Limjap and Ancasco Jingo Tuason emerged winners.

Limjap concluded session Iggy Chantelle, 3 and 2, while Tuason upended Ronnie Litman by the same score.

Anyway, still had a chance to square the match to the last remaining flight, but Rudy Garcia stuck his six-iron approach from 163 yards to within six inches of the cup on the 17th hole to tie him Mael Bodoano and secure the win for La Salle.

Anyway skipper Tobey Andoy was generous in defeat. "La Salle played well," Jovico said. "We were all tired, but La Salle got all the breaks."

Mendoza thought they had breaks or legs. "We could still play nine holes," said Mendoza who had seven players before 20 years old.

MEMBERS OF the Red Team, including Harbour Centre owner Mikee Romero (No. 10), celebrate after beating the Blue team to win the finals of the recent PBBDC basketball championship.

Romero leads Red to Finex title

THE RED TEAM, BANKROLLED BY HARBOUR Centre owner Mikee Romero, outclassed the Blue Team, 58-46, to rule the recent 15th Finex Inter-Dealership Basketball Championship.

PCBC's MVP Mary Ty and Servus' Members' Penhard C&C Raymond del Val joined hands with Romero for the victory over the blue of Bancode Gen's Ed Francisco, PBB's Rhea David and Philbuilder's Benjie Clemente.

Romero, a member of La Salle varsity team in the 90s also emerged the most valuable player in the tournament with his big shots and bullding playmaking.

Finex is an association of the country's top 1,000 CEOs and CFOs. Some 700 top executives are taking part in the annual event.

Romero, 36, exploded for 20 points in a brilliant show of shooting accuracy.

The Red squad, which also topped the elimination round, also got big games from Export Import Bank's Bally Inkmeyada, LCPI's MVP Roy Aviles, Ayala Raymund Jadera, Ali and Jonathan del Val, and Carlo and Billy Bolivar.

Other members of the Blue squad were Metrobank Card's Jorge Tuparoya, Allied Bank's Ivan Albano, ATR-Kim Eng's Billy Gomez and Hourcam's Louie Montoya.

Last ABS-CBN's IT director Johnny Ay, Gotesco finished third while Nike placed fourth.

BUSINESS
Editor Raul D. Mercado • Assistant Editor Cavite S. Mariano

Potential labor dispute brewing at Mirant

IN THIS ISSUE
BPI's Christmas gravy /B3

Local employees worried, turn to DOLE for help

By Abigail L. Ho

ACCUSING ATLANTA-BASED MIRANT CORP OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION and of issuing false statements, employees of Mirant Philippines Corp. have turned to the Department of Labor and Employment for help to settle a "potential labor dispute" related to the sale of the American firm's Philippine assets.

In three separate petitions filed with the DOLE last Friday, corporate employee representatives Jaro Bello, Mara Anna dela Reyes and Andres Ramos urged the labor department to intervene in a "potential labor dispute that may result in massive labor unrest of employees," leading to a possible disruption of power supply in Luzon.

Mirant Philippines' more than 1,200 employees said the company's current management failed to provide them with a definite program that would protect their interest once Illinois had sold its Philippine holdings.

"The employees persistently demanded this protection from the management, but management consistently ignored, despite oral and written demands, to respond fully and definitely address these concerns," a letter addressed to Labor Secretary Arturo Brion stated.

Employees are seeking the formulation of a severance policy that will guarantee severance

POTENTIAL B2

Cebu Pacific loses Japan entitlements to PAL

By Riza T. Olchondra

CEBU PACIFIC WAS SENT ITS remaining 4-5 flight entitlements to Japan to start Philippine Airlines (PAL).

Under the Philippine-Japan air service agreement, Cebu Pacific had sworn flight entitlements to Japan.

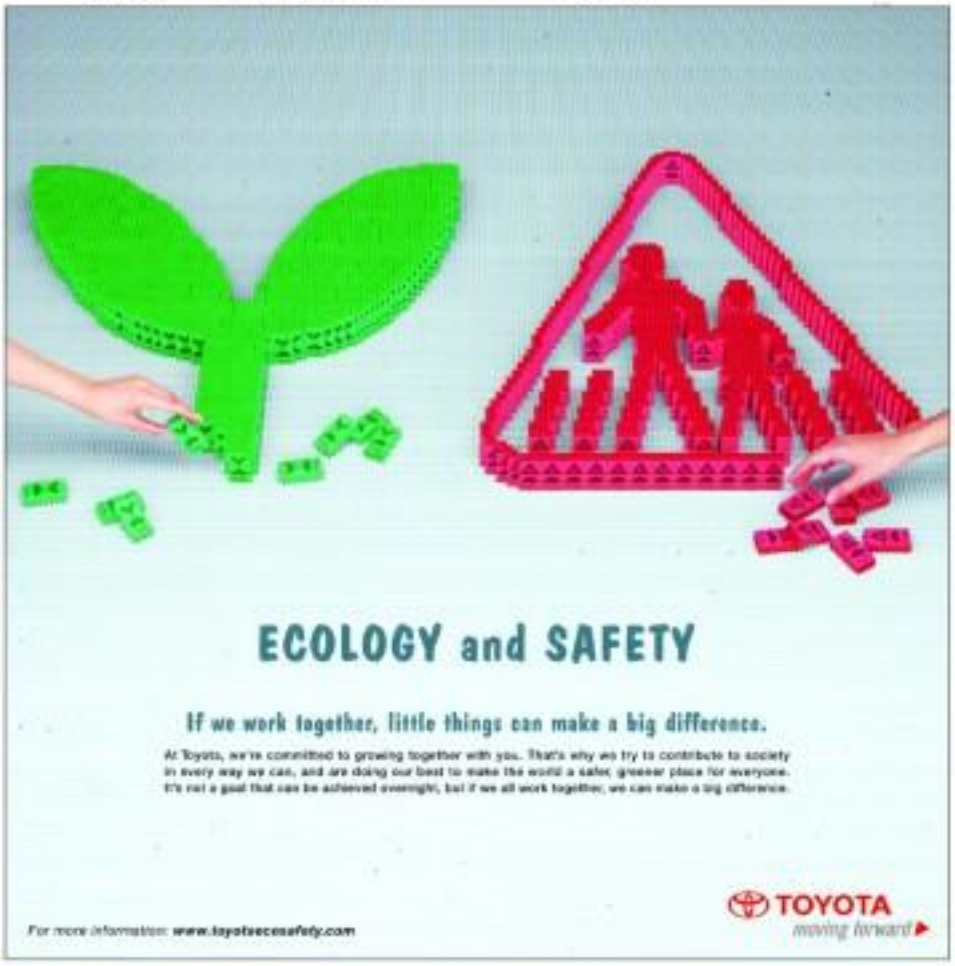
The same agreement said frequency entitlements are measured by coefficients, with one round-trip flight equivalent to one coefficient using a Boeing 727 aircraft, which has a seating capacity of 228. Each airframe for an Airbus 330, which can carry 220 to 295 passengers, and two coefficients for Boeing 747, which has a seating capacity of 347 to 400.

However, the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) enabled Cebu Pacific's seven entitlements to Japan last month when the budget carrier failed to serve its seven roundtrip flight entitlements at a pre-agreed date.

"They (Cebu Pacific) were not able to operate (flights) to Japan," he said. [C]AB deputy executive director Carmelo L. Arcilla said in an interview.

The regulator has transferred 2.5 of the seven coefficients.

PESO B4



Firewalling done wrong

ONE OF THE MOST DESCRIPTIVE speeches one current bureaucrat and the overall economy made in last week's Philippine Business Conference didn't quite receive as much attention as anyone as it deserves. Understandably Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri's candid presentation on Philippine competitiveness got embedded in a session located on Saturday and Social orthanna. This delivered unvarnished from the most crucial elements of his analysis of impediments to realizing the Philippines' full economic potentials.

Wrong audience!

Perhaps, this annual gathering of the biggest names in Philippine business could not be expected to be the most receptive audience in his candid diagnosis. After all, his thesis is that the ultimate source of our economy's unsatisfactories rests to this time between the economic and political power of an oligarchic elite tending it over our existing economy and politics. Yet another way there is an unspoken unholy alliance between big business interests and the political powers in control of our state institutions, and this has consistently held our economic progress back for decades.

NO FREE LUNCH
Cielito F. Habito

Still, the greater part of Neri's audience last week did not have reviled alluded to, as the unwritten edge of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) certainly goes well beyond those who may be considered part of the oligarchic elite that the progressive Necta chief refers to. Nor does this oligarchic elite never neatly include all the big business players, as there will always be some among them who for one reason or another are not in good graces with the powers that be at a particular point in time.

Vicious cycles

Central to Secretary Neri's analysis is what he calls the vicious cycles of heavy regulation, poor governance, poverty and social chaos. And it all starts to how the effective control over policy by a powerful few (the "oligarchic elite") leads to distorted policies and weak institutions, i.e. where good economics and the greater public interest give way to the narrow interests of a favored few.

Examples of distorted policies abound. The watered-down anti-trust law, the recent EO 913, to enforce trade protection for a few selected sectors, redundant fiscal incentives, and so on. The weakness in our institutions has severe been more manifested than as we have been witnessing in the past few years. The other manifestation that Secretary Neri highlights is "regulatory capture," or the greater sense to anchor influence of our regulatory bodies by the very firms they are supposed to regulate.

All these further reinforce the economic power of the oligarchs, which in turn reinforces their influence and outright control over public policy (e.g. via election campaign financing), thereby bringing us full circle.

Perpetuating backwardness

Meanwhile, the vicious cycle of self-reinforcing economic and political power perpetuates our perennial problems of poverty and high unemployment, poor education and health, and low respect for the law. Neri identifies two zones by which this happens.

First, distorted policies and weak institutions deter job-creating investments by both foreign and domestic business interests. Indeed, one of the most alarming economic statistics of late is the continuing decline in investments in the country starting in early 2005—whereas the graphs are all moving up among our neighbors! And as I pointed out last week, this is despite the tremendous growth in our foreign direct investments, telling us that it is an domestic environment where our problems lies.

Second, policy distortions and weak institutions, enhanced by endemic corruption in the bureaucracies, lead to the "rule of rules" (e.g. official sanctions on unwarranted monopolies, or even continue rewards to favor-oriented and diversion of public expenditures away from more urgent and more basic needs of the greater majority.

Firewalling the managers

As a tourist to Neri's speech (along with those of Secretary Ong on the fiscal situation) in the same program, I could not but agree with his analysis. The same thesis was in fact expounded in the paper "Towards the Fiscal Cliff" released by Action Economics and political watchers over a year ago, and this characterization of the Philippine political economy is shared by numerous authors in and out of the country as well.

The problem is that our economic managers, competent and well-meaning as I know they are, can only do so much. One friend, Congressman Joey Salceda, asserts that the government has managed to "firewall" the economy from the ongoing political turmoil. But from what I see, our economic managers often appear to be the ones firewalled out of current political decisions with profound implications on the economy, for as long as unsound political forces—the same ones Secretary Neri laments—hold sway over the sound advice of our competent economic managers.

It would be very hard indeed for us to be part of the East Asian Renaissance that World Bank Country Director Joachim von Amsberg has recently championed the same audience with in his opening keynote at that conference.

Comments welcome at cfabito@philstar.com.ph

AS LOW AS P250 FAX REPAIR
OFFICE EQUIPMENTS REPAIR
ALL BRANDS, ALL MODELS
15% DISCOUNT

BEDRIDDEN WITH BEDSORES?
FLYPAD
FAR EAST MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

WE'LL FIX IT FAST!

CALL 722 - 8888 OR TEXT (0927) 2501581 For Sales & Service
OFFICE
Canon
RICOH
Intimus
olivetti

ELITEGROUP
12" or 14"?
ECSperience...
the Best of both worlds...
13.3 wide LCD and Intel Core 2 13.00 processor
M31E
SRP: Php 44,995
W330S
SRP: Php 34,995
G530
SRP: Php 26,995
S27
SRP: Php 24,995
Simply Smart

Do more with Acer TravelMate.
Now comes bundled with all the essential tools to keep you more productive even on the road.
Promo Period: Oct 23-31, 2006
acer

BPI's Christmas gravy

ON TOP OF THE P1.00 ANNUAL cash dividend, and another 20-percent stock dividend, the nearly 15,000 shareholders of Bank of the Philippine Islands should expect an extra P1 cash dividend in time for the holidays.

The 2-oldest bank has altogether allocated more than P2.7 billion to spread a little Christmas cheer that sees the cashroom fire who collectively acquired the stock at the high-end 962.50-share is about the same time last year—BPI closed Friday at P968.50...will have reason to smile.

Let us do some number-crunching.

The P82.50 acquisition cost will have translated itself, after the 20 percent share dividend, to as P68/share.

With Friday's close, the post-dividend price already translates to an P8.50-share price gain, year-on-year; with the P1.00 cash dividend tacked on, the consolidated yield notches up to about 12.6 percent.

Even better, those who correctly timed the market and picked up the stock at the P50 range in the same quarter last year minus that, just-share dividend, their one-year acquisition cost goes down to P40/share.

Adding the P1.00 cash dividends nails the P18.50-share price gain translates to an effective and generous 35.25-percent annual yield.

For a conservative, straight-laced bank, that certainly beats by far what BPI pays depositors, which is anywhere from 0.875-percent interest for an Express Teller peso savings account holders to 2.875-percent annual yield for a platinum depositor, one who maintains at least P1 million average daily balance.

Aside from the Soquianons and the Ayalas, the two biggest BPI shareholders, the Archdiocese of Manila should be thankful for the good tidings in these ungrateful times—about 8.47 percent of the P2.7-billion blessings would accrue to Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales and his favorite charities. Another winner: A certain Lilibeth de Jesus of Tanauan, Batangas, who, in more than 1.25 million shares as of mid-2005, is listed as the biggest individual single shareholder, beating even the likes of Ferdie Madrigal Pizzini and former BPI president Xavier Loinaz.

Scout attack

HOW would you like your girl scout daughter or younger sister to go out on a jamboree and share the camp with boy scouts?

The Girl Scouts of the Philippines is not only horrified at the thought, but revealed that a bill has been filed in Congress that could end up having the marriage of the girl scouts group with the boy scouts.

A bill filed by Makati Rep. Agapito Aquino representing the Boy Scouts of the Philippines into history Philippines has already passed third and final reading in the House.

But, even before the bill could be passed by the Senate and enacted into law, the Boy Scouts have already been recruiting girls from 11 years up to join their movement.

The Boy Scouts, incidentally is headed by Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay while the Girl Scouts count on no less than Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as chief scout.

According to the grapevine, Girl Scouts president Teresita Chan is now working on GMA's congressional allies to not only block the Aquino bill but also push for the passage of a separate Girl Scouts bill to ensure that the corporate identity of the female group remains.

More than the gender divide, the Girl Scouts did run a number of real estate buildings in key cities throughout the country.

Monay-go-round

▲ CITIBANK has been ordered by the Supreme Court to return close $150,000 in deposits, plus interest, that it seized way back in 1979 from Geneva deputies Pangasinan district Modesto Sobrevinas.

In addition, the multinational bank was also ordered to return more than P920,000 in promissory notes, plus 14.5-percent interest from 1977, to Sobrevinas.

Sobrevinas, in return, was ordered to pay Citibank P1.865 million in loan plus interest the loan-turned-cash politician borrowed in 1979.

▼ TABUSOKS is grumbling that it has not received a single centavo from the P3-billion payment released by the government to Piatco.

Heard through the grapevine

BOBBY JARENO was apparently not out only to clear his name but to settle scores against his former PR consultant, Jose Manuel "Babe" Romualdez, and Romualdez's parties, politician Blanquita Arellano, whom he appeared last week in Kris Cantojan's talk show on ANC.

It was the former Manila councilman who presented himself to Cantojang to ask the broadcaster that he be invited to the talk show.

(Email: cocktales@mail.info.ph)

Mitsubishi keeps plan to make RP an export base

By Raoul W. Dunstan

Local multi-purpose vehicles or AUVs for overseas market

MITSUBISHI MOTORS PHILIPPINES Corp. is doubling-up its plans of making the country one of the Mitsubishi group's global export base of completely built vehicles.

The company, however, has yet to make an investment decision on the said facility.

Company senior vice president Mitsilver B. Dilem said in an interview that the initial concept for the vehicles, initially called Zinger, was being revised.

Dilem said the initial plan was to make an entry level SUV, but this would be probably repackaged into a multi-purpose vehicle or an 8-seat all-SUV vehicle.

"[The Zinger] is actually being made already in Taiwan," he said, "but two-seater production lines are being considered, possibly China and the Philippines."

In a 2004 interview, Dilem had said Mitsubishi Motor's (the biggest stockholder of Mitsubishi Motors with a 37-percent stake) announcement that it was not lobbying new capital into Mitsubishi puts opportunities for MMPC to be the group's new production base of a new SUV model.

Mitsubishi has existing production facilities in the Philippines and all that is needed is to modernize them to be competitive in the export market, he said.

The remarks came in the wake of an MMPC announcement that was that it was laying out P16 billion for an SUV export project that called for the production of at least 200,000 units in six to seven years from 2006.

Two-thirds of the output would be earmarked for export to the Southeast Asian market and possibly to the Middle East, Africa and South America.

The project was expected to yield between 8,000 jobs and 8,040 millions in export value added and generate 16,000 new jobs. It is also expected to absorb P5.8 billion worth of local automotive parts a year.

DOF, Dilem said MMPC was keen on dumping the second plant in the local tax entry in terms of sales, saying the company was ready to undertake aggressive promotions to do so.

Last week, MMPC launched three new models—the 2007 Strada pick up, Eclipse sports car and the Lancer Evolution IX sedan.

He said the company would be introducing three or four more models in the next 18 months, including the Endeavor SUV which would be imported from the United States.

Nationwide Property Listings for Auction at lowest downpayment/lowest interest rate/longest term to pay

www.propertyforum.net.ph

The PROPERTY FORUM PHILS., The No. 1 Property Auctioneer in the Country

407 ARK Condominium, 92 Sierra Madre St. Mandaluyong Tel: (02)5349725 / (02)5349536 Fax: (02)5349814

Napocor expects to post profit in '06

By Abigail L. Ho

AS THE PESO CONTINUED TO STRENGTHen against the dollar, state-run National Power Corp. expects to post a positive operating income or even a net income this year.

Napocor president Cyril del Calzar said it was difficult to project a specific number at this point, as the unhedging of foreign exchange gains or losses would be in real-for-credits.

Despite this, he expressed confidence that Napocor would post at least positive earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization (Ebitda), an indicator of cash flow, this year.

"Our fighting target is to assume the projected last year," he told reporters at the sidelines of the 22nd Philippine Business Conference last week.

The strongest peso, he said, would contribute to Napocor's expected positive financial results for the year.

He said that for every P1 gain or loss against the dollar, the impact on Napocor was around P10 billion.

Last year, Napocor posted a net income of almost P16 billion, after almost a decade in the red.

Del Calzar attributed last year's turnaround to substantial foreign exchange gains, stringent cost-cutting measures, revised tariff-based generation rates and the Energy Regulatory Commission's approval of its asset sales.

Napocor registered gains of P65.2 billion from the peso appreciation and the battery sale, he said, but these were not realized.

The state firm's finance department, he said, had been using P52.51 as the exchange rate for its financial projections.

These past weeks, the peso-dollar rate had been steady at the 56:1 level.

This should have a positive impact on the company's bottom line, he said, even though the exchange rate would not be until Dec. 31.

In terms of power sales, he said sales were good in the third quarter, as they usually are due to increased production from industries preparing for the holiday season.

"Demand is picking up. The third quarter is historically a strong quarter, so expectations are to meet orders for Christmas. In the fourth quarter, residential power demand usually picks up," he said.

THE POSSIBILITIES ARE INFINITE FUJITSU

LifeBook P7120
- Personal and mobile at 1.36kg*
- Ultra slim design with slim modular bay drive
- Long battery life of up to 7.8hrs

LifeBook P1510
- Ultra light at approx. 1kg*
- Versatile and convertible
- Pen input capability
- SD and CF card slots

* With 3-cell battery and 60GB HDD

LifeBook P7010
- Personal and mobile
- Long battery life of up to 11.2hrs with optional battery
- Modular bay drive

Tuna firm eyes bigger share of Middle East mart

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

ALLIANCE TUNA INTERNATIONAL INC. is considering expanding its market in Dubai or Africa by setting up a marketing office in one of these two locations, company president Jonathan Dee said.

Dee said statistics showed that these areas import a lot of tuna although his company had yet to penetrate their markets.

The Middle East is Alliance Tuna's third largest export market next to Europe and the United States and Canada.

He said Alliance Tuna might forge possible partnerships with trading firms or with distribution companies in either Dubai, for the Middle East market, or in Africa.

The company manufactures canned tuna and other processed seafoods in its facilities in Cotabato, Sarangani and General Santos City. It also maintains a marketing office in Bangkok, Thailand.

The Securities and Exchange Commission earlier approved the application of Alliance Tuna for the registration of its shares, which will pave the way for its maiden offering to the local investor community.

It will be the third company to hold initial public offering (IPO) this year, after Petron Corporation and Cebu Air Inc.

In documents filed with the SEC, Alliance Tuna estimated that it would generate between P349 million and P450 million from the IPO.

Debate on loans to small, medium firms rages

SB Corp. wants banks to lend more capital; banks hesitant

By Dixie L. Lucir

MANY SMALL AND MEDIUM enterprises in the country still lack access to capital, despite government's promise to put more funds within reach of this crucial economic segment.

According to the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), a large number of its 20,000-odd members nationwide remain cut off from the formal banking system.

This is either because they are perceived to be unworthy of credit, or they lack the expertise and savvy to navigate the intricacies of the banking system.

Lack of access

"The consistent top complaint of our small members is the lack of access to loans," PCCI president Donald Dee said in an interview. "Banks are always hesitant to lend to small companies."

And for good reason: This local banking industry is still reeling from the nine-item effects of the 1997 East Asian financial crisis.

Doomsday's gone for bankers

Dee said he learned just this week from banking executives at a social function that a good bank current and valuable collateral before loans can be approved—primarily the electronic that SMEs lack, according to Dee.

Even if banks are willing, the situation remedied, urging government to ease loans that will compel banks to mind more to the sector, which provides work to an estimated four million employees nationwide.

In the forefront of this campaign is the Small Business Guarantee and Finance Corp. (SB Corp.), a unit of the Department of Trade and Industry charged with helping bridge the gap between SMEs and the banking community.

Amendments urged

SB Corp. is urging Congress to approve amendments to the Magna Carta for Small Enterprises of 1991, which provides for the mandatory allocation of 4 percent of bank loans to this sector despite alleged inertia.

In particular, SB Corp. president Jesus P. Lagos wants Congress to extend the life of the law—which is originally set to expire by May 2007—by another 10 years.

More importantly, the agency wants Congress to compel banks to lend more money to SMEs, much to the consternation of bankers who are skeptical about directed credit programs in general.

"We are asking Congress to increase the minimum allocation from 4 percent [of banks' loan portfolio] at present to 10 percent," Lagos said in an interview.

DEE

CORONEL

Right now, the 4-percent requirement of between P700,000 and P1 million," he said. "These are the SMEs that will benefit from this [proposed amendment]."

Banks, however, are bristling at the thought of being forced to allocate more money to borrowers, which they believe are too risky to deal with on a wholesale basis.

Been there, done that

According to the Bankers Association of the Philippines (BAP), most of the country's largest financial institutions have already "over-complied" with the requirements of the 1991 law.

"If you look at our reports to the central bank, we're already lending [to SMEs] much more than what's required," BAP executive director Leonilo Coronel said.

Indeed, data from the BSP show that banks have consistently lent over 10 percent of their loans to SMEs since 1992 when the law came into full swing, peaking at 16.6 percent in 2002, before dropping to the 11-percent range in recent years.

Even when alternative forms of compliance, like deposits with the central bank, are stripped out, direct loans to SMEs by the banking system have not dipped below the 10-percent threshold since 1992.

"What's the point of asking for more?" Coronel asked.

The BAP official reasoned banks may have good reason for turning down loan applications of some SMEs, which the financial institutions may see as too risky.

"We have to look at specific incidences," he said. "Some of these have very basic credit problems."

Coronel added that forcing banks to lend money to companies it considers to be too risky violates a basic principle of free market economics.

"The question is credit allocation is 'Will the money be repaid?'" he said pointing to the poorer repayment track record of some smaller firms.

The concept of state-directed credit programs has long been discredited around the world, with the Philippines having its own share of failures like the Agri-Agra Law—still in effect—which requires banks to lend 25 percent of their loans to agricultural and agrarian reform-oriented concerns.

Long-term solution

BSP's departure notwithstanding, SB Corp.'s point is valid, given the reality that many of the country's 800,000-plus small firms are often kept from achieving their potential by the lack of access to funding.

For PCCI's Dee, however, the solution may not necessarily come in the form of having banks to lend more money but in teaching SMEs how to borrow properly.

The organization has set up an SME support group which will help entrepreneurs navigate the difficult channels of business, especially in terms of funding.

"They have no technical expertise, no financial history and no collateral," Dee said of many SMEs. "We want to teach them how to get funding even under these circumstances."

Indeed, when it comes to coming a loser, whether it's a corporation or an individual—nothing flows how to fish, rather than being given fish, is the better long-term solution.

FRANCHISE YOUR BUSINESS!

Francorp

OCT. 31 (Tues) 1:00-5:00 PM

LEARN FROM THE EXPERTS

Tel. 535-7143-49/50

Mobile: 0917-625-5531

info@francorp.com.ph

BE THE NEXT FRANCHISE SUCCESS

Barako farmers ready to export after 20-yr absence

By Christina A. Gaylican

COFFEE FARMERS FROM ARAKOKO, CAVITE are getting ready to export organic barako coffee beans for the first time in nearly 20 years absence from the world market.

"We're giving the Barako another shot at the export market, and this time, our aim is to produce organic coffee, not just for the local market but also to meet the growing global market for organically-grown coffee beans," said Fr. gave CEO Pacita U. Juan in an interview.

Juan said there was growing demand for organic coffee in Europe, particularly Germany as well as in the United States and Japan.

"I believe that we can do what is being done in East Africa, which is a poor region like the Philippines," said Juan.

She noted that East Africa was now among the world's biggest organic coffee producers, rising with Bolivia.

The predominant of Barako or the Philippine Liberica bean, which is known for its particularly strong taste, powerful body and distinctive pungent odor, is picking up pace.

Maybe 10 years ago, it was on the brink of extinction as coffee farmers turned to other cash crops because of the drop in the world market price for coffee.

Coffee farmers were encouraged to go back to their farms with the rise in produce prices and the intervention of nongovernment organizations and companies such as Figaro.

Juan said Figaro's medium term plans included exporting organic Barako or Liberian coffee, which is said to be grown in Amadeo, Cavite.

The company also hoped to export organic Arabica coffee grown in Benguet, Kalinga and Ifugao.

She said the company was being assisted in this effort by the German Development Service, which helped in establishing an organic coffee quality control system with coffee farmers' cooperatives.

At the same time, Figaro has commissioned international organic certifying body Naturland Verband of Germany, to monitor its 360 organic coffee farms and to make sure that farmers implement good agricultural practices before certifying the Barako and Arabica coffee as organic.

Naturland is accredited by the United States Department of Agriculture, the National Organic Program and the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements.

A STEAMING-HOT BUSINESS

Now yours to Franchise

Franchise opportunities available for Kiosks and Restaurants

Call us for more information.

Cebu Pacific loses Japan . . . From page B1

dents to Pacific East Asia Cargo last month.

PAL applied for the remaining 4.5 and the regulator approved the application only last week.

Earlier this year, PAL and Cebu Pacific expressed interest to flying to Nagoya, Japan, citing market expectations of an uptick in demand.

Japan is the Philippines' second-biggest source of foreign arrivals, next to the United States. An estimated 300,000 Japanese fly to the Philippines each year, while some 170,000 overseas Filipinos are said to fly to Japan.

However, Cebu Pacific "unfortunately returned the seven coefficients on CAB," a CAB official said via text message.

Cebu Pacific president and CEO Lance Gokongwei confirmed to reporters that the budget carrier had given up its Japan establishment, saying the airline had other priority destinations.

Potential labor dispute . . . From page B1

pay of 2.5 months' salary for every year of service, while Mirant Philippines is already practicing this, there is no formal policy regarding this.

Mirant Philippines chair, president and chief executive Jose Lorenzo II had earlier said that the severance pay practice would be formally included in the company's policies.

"We're going to put it as part of our company policy. It's just a practice, and our written policy does not reflect it. We're going to put this in writing and secure our employees if that severance package," he said in an earlier interview.

Company employees, however, said this promise had yet to be fulfilled, even as the sale of Mirant's Philippine assets drew near.

Mirant expects the sale to take place next month.

In their DOLE petition, employees likewise accused the company's American parent of union discrimination, citing a US Securities and Exchange Commission filing that said Mirant's US employees would be given far better terms in relation to the Philippine asset sale.

"It is very apparent that Filipino employees are being treated unfairly in the US SEC filing on Dec. 1, Mirant Corp. in Miami announced the grant of $39 million to 128 US employees for the successful sale of the Philippine assets," the letter said. "Filipino employees who worked hard not only for the sale but also for making Mirant Philippines a very profitable company get nothing."

Issuing severance pays to all 1,500 Mirant Philippines employees will cost around $29 million, or $7 million less than the promised sale bonus for Mirant's US employees.

The only Filipino employee included in the $39-million sale bonus, the letter noted, was Lorenzo.

Another TOWER Rises in TOYOTA

"I was hired by Toyota, and from that point, my life took a meaningful turn."

Antonio Ginseng

Another member of the Toyota Motor Philippines workforce wins The Outstanding Workers of the Republic (TOWER) award.

Antonio Ginseng, a member of the production line at the Toyota Special Economic Zone in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, received the Tower award on June 8, 2005 at the Century Park Hotel.

The Rotary Club of Manila confers TOWER awards to the country's most outstanding non-executive blue collar and white collar workers.

"The 8th recognition" of a Toyota Team Member is a validation of the exemplary excellent, and exceptional values embraced by the company and its employees.

Guided by the philosophy of continuous improvement called Kaizen - one of Toyota's core work values - Ginseng ensured quality of the product as well as the safety of the workplace in his 12 years of service at Toyota Motor Philippines.

"I was hired by Toyota, and from that point, my life took a meaningful turn. In return, I performed my work to the best of my abilities, accepting challenges and changes to meet targets with promptness and dedication," Ginseng said.

Toyota Motor Philippines President Hiroshi Ito hailed Ginseng for winning even more honor that Toyota Motor Philippines Corporation is, indeed, a company of great people.

TOYOTA moving forward

Metro Pacific to launch tender offer

Holding firm to swap common shares held by minority shareholders with new stock

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

METRO PACIFIC INVESTMENTS CORP. THE new debt firm holding firm that will replace Metro Pacific Corp. (MPC), will launch a buyout offer this week for all minority shareholders of MPC, the unit of Hong Kong giant First Pacific Co. Ltd.

MPC corporate information officer David Nieto said Metro Pacific Investments will launch the tender offer on Oct. 27.

Last Friday, Metro Pacific Investments received the Securities and Exchange Commission's approval to register 36.9 million common shares and 720.6 million warrants—or rights to buy common shares for a certain price within a specific period of time—with underlying 720.6 common shares to be issued in connection with its tender offer.

Metro Pacific Investments earlier got the green light from major MPC shareholders—Metro Pacific Holdings Inc., Metro Pacific Resources Inc., Intelbah and Pan Pacific International Ltd.—to acquire 725.2 million common shares in MPC.

The shares will be acquired using a four-to-one share swap, or one Metro Pacific Investments share for every four MPC common shares, according to documents filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

In line with Philippine tender offer rules, Metro Pacific Investments will offer to swap the remaining 227.3 million common shares owned by minority shareholders of MPC with up to 56.9 million new Metro Pacific Investments shares on the same four-to-one share swap ratio.

To enhance the value of the offer to MPC minority shareholders, Metro Pacific Investments is also offering up to 170.6 million warrants—an exchange ratio of three warrants plus one offer share for every four MPC shares.

Metro Pacific Investments was founded as a corporate vehicle to acquire and accelerate the growth of MPC's former real estate development subsidiary Landco.

Metro Pacific Investments acquired 51 percent of the equity interest of MPC in Landco for P602.7 million. The holding firm also acquired outstanding receivables of MPC from Landco worth P138 million. It plans to use the proceeds from the receivables to subscribe to additional shares in Landco.

To support the expansion of Landco's businesses, Metro Pacific Investments will raise capital worth P3 billion through a private placement of its shares in Metro Pacific Holdings Inc. or Metro Pacific Resources Inc. and Ashmore Global Special Situations Fund 2 Limited or other funds managed by Ashmore Investment Management Ltd. The placement will be conducted after Metro Pacific Investments' tender offer.

The proceeds of the private placement will be used to increase Metro Pacific Investments' investment in Landco to 67.3 percent. After the private placement, Metro Pacific Investments is expected to have a capital of P3.1 billion.

Analysts expect some correction in market trade

ANALYSTS HAVE A MIXED OUTLOOK FOR market trading this week, with some saying there may be some selling after the index touched fresh highs last week.

"Maybe a little, little correction is expected, but I'm still very bullish after the index broke out. I broke the former psychological level of 2,000 points last week," said Philsagah Investments president Eugene Espeleta Jr. "The next one got to 2,000."

In its weekly report, AB Capital Securities cited the triggers that could drive up investments. These include: a potential credit rating upgrade for the Philippines, given improving fiscal targets; the positive trajectory of interest rates by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, given some inflation numbers; good third quarter results due in early November, helped by forex gains from the peso appreciation; and, better gross domestic product numbers expected in the third quarter, given good exports and economy-in-the-making sectors.

ATR Kim Eng Securities said in presentations to the Philippine Stock Exchange that inflation will also fall further in 2007 with the full year impact of the expanded value-added tax (VAT). With oil prices however remain a risk factor. Inflation is expected to be 6.1 percent in 2006 from 7.6 percent last year, while GDP will grow to 5.7 percent this year from 5.1 percent in 2005, ATR Kim Eng said.

"Underlying forces remain solid that outside of the country, market players will check for responses and reactions in the US Federal Reserve's upcoming meeting on Oct. 25, as well as formal minutes from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) ministers' meeting on crude production cuts.

"So far there has been wide consensus for US monetary authorities to maintain the status quo on interest rates, despite recent improvement in housing data. If this expectation is sustained,... local monetary authorities exhibit the exploratory up to maintain benchmark interest rates, supporting improved lending operations in high-margin consumer sector and assist in corporate capital expansion plans," Philsbridge Corp. said.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez

Chowking's Indian foray takes shape

CHOWKING FOOD Corp., the country's second largest fast food chain, has entered the next stage in its planned expansion into India, Asia's fourth largest economy.

Chowking president Pedro dela Rosa said in an interview that Chowking has completed a study which showed that it is highly viable for the fast food chain to establish by next year a presence in India—a market that also prefers Chinese food.

"It's a good market because of the dense population, the standard of living and the preference for Chinese food," Dela Rosa said. "We have to be able to start by next year. The market opportunity is there."

He said that the next, a decision will be made whether Jollibee Foods Corp., Chowking's parent firm, or Chowking itself will enter the Indian market.

Typically, it costs around $2.2 million to set up a Chowking store overseas.

What has contributed to arouse the Jollibee group's ire in the country's banking economy, with its full small expansions and where Chowking went. Last year, Jollibee dropped talks with New Delhi family restaurant Nirula's, but said it is still eyeing more acquisitions in India and China.

Aside from India, Chowking is expanding into Indonesia, Dubai and the United States this year.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez

Seaboard-Eastern INSURANCE TODO

IS MOVING

To its new
Head Office location at:

3rd Floor, Jaka 6780
Ayala Avenue
Makati City, Philippines

Starting October 25, 2006, if you are unable to reach us at our usual trunk lines 812 7788 and 750 7788, please call the following alternative numbers:

Marketing, Billing & Collections: 8127781 to 84
Motor & Claims: 8127785 to 87
Others: 8127788 to 90 * 8175308
Office of the Chairman: 7506689

You may also contact Jun Vallejos of our Manila Branch at Tel. 244.5775 or Fax 240.2431

On October 26 & 27, please send your faxes to 240.2431.

Please bear with us for the inconvenience.
We hope to resume normal business operations by November 2006.

CDC plans to further develop Mimosa property

PRESIDENT: Macapagal-Arroyo congratulates Frederico T. Herrera Jr., chair and CEO of Mimosa Holdings Philippines Inc., for winning the Aurelio Periquet Jr. Business Leadership Award. Herrera was cited for his success in entrepreneurship—starting in micro-financing, rising to national business leadership in the fields of infrastructure and technology. The award was given by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) during the 33rd Philippine Business Conference. (PNA)

Bidding, negotiated sale among agency's options

By Rumzel M. Dumlao

CLARK DEVELOPMENT CORP. (CDC) will take about two years to bring the process of privatizing the Mimosa property in Clark economic zone back on track after a completed bidding failed for the second time last July.

Philip M. Bonilla, CDC executive vice president and chief operating officer, said in an interview that the managing agency of the former US air base wanted "to put things in order" first and prepare the Mimosa estate better for privatization.

Clark authorities had considered a third bidding as soon as the contract awarded to a South Korean group that won the May bidding fell more troubled.

The contract, awarded on June 9 to MTM Air Hung Asia Investors Corp., was withdrawn when then winning bidder failed to comply with the terms of bid covenants, particularly the payment required to start the implementation of the lease agreement.

MTM Air Hung's offer promised the government an initial revenue of P650 million on top of the yearly rental of $1.2 million.

MTM Air Hung also promised to pour in additional investments of P1.42 billion to finish or improve on the property's villas, casinos, golf course and country club, water theme park, promenade and hotel.

Bonilla said a third bidding was just one of the many options that the CDC would consider when it was time to resume the property privatization.

In a July interview, then CDC president Jose Antonio H. Ng said the agency had two options under the law in the event of a failed second bidding—go into a third public bidding or enter into direct negotiations with at least three parties.

Neither development of the lease matter to be undertaken before privatization resumes will influence the way the process would be done, he added.

The first bidding was held in 2003 but it was declared a failure because not a single bid was submitted.

CDC took over the management of Mimosa in 1999 after operator Mobil Angeles Leisure and Resort Corp. failed to pay lease rentals amounting to P400-million.

The raging storm around 'Milenyo'

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Mortesito C. Gonzales

MILENYO WAS THE KIND OF TYphoon that wreaks havoc on Metro Manila every 25 years or so. Let us think not lucky stars that Milenyo does not happen more often.

Because of the resulting damage, public utility firms such as Meralco and PLDT, not to mention my cable TV provider and the garbage collector in my neighborhood, have been pilloried for the slow pace of rehabilitation. There is still debris around my block.

The owner in the maintenance department of your giant firms like Meralco and PLDT handle only day-to-day normal wear and tear. Surely, you cannot expect Meralco to keep on the payroll an extra emergency crew that will be needed only every 25 years. Also, when a typhoon like Milenyo hits, Meralco and PLDT cannot just recruit extra personnel from off the streets. Electrical and telephone linemen are skilled technicians who take a lot of time to train.

So, what a typhoon like Milenyo hits, every maintenance overseer worries about is: Does the garbage collector in my neighborhood has to schedule extra trips to haul away the debris. Meralco was able to light up my house only after I literally waylaid a crew passing by at about eight in the morning. The crew had been working the whole day.

Another thing to consider is that the distribution lines of Meralco and PLDT, or any other utility firm in any part of the country, are not strong up to signal 200-km winds. If they were, your light and phone bills would ruin your monthly budgets.

Silhouette are not also built to stand 200-km winds. Maybe they should. But it looks like most of the structures were undamaged. Strict governmental standards are set, and a thorough—and sober—study should be made. I do not think the advertising industry should be blamed too much for the damage to billboards inflicted by Milenyo.

I remember a long time ago, it was suggested that the distribution lines should be built underground, as in New York City. The idea never flew because many parts of Metro Manila are below sea level. Also the tremendous expense would wind up in your light and phone bills.

On the other hand, Napocor's transmission lines that bring power to Metro Manila from the Bataan-to-Bicol are built to stand the strongest typhoons recorded in the past 100 years. Before that Milenyo delivers ripple a single transmission tower.

Napocor can easily get typhoon insurance on its transmission lines. But it is extremely difficult for even giant utility firms like Meralco or PLDT to get typhoon insurances on their extremely risky distribution lines. Sometimes, as the statement of the creditor banks, insurance companies are bound to locate distribution lines. If they do, it will always be with a high deductible and at a very high premium rate.

The last time a terrible typhoon passes by, do what every freedom does...stay home.

RP broadband technology goes regional

By Ricz T. Dichoso

LATITUDE BROADBAND INC., A LOCAL broadband equipment maker that built the network of Smart Communications Inc., has benefited its Latitude 400 Pro Access Control and Management solution in Singapore to mark its entry into the international broadband market.

Latitude's 400 Pro enables carriers to convert the Fixed WiMa technology into small-scale broadband network services for large-scale network implementation.

Fixed WiMA allows service providers, especially in developing countries, to market affordable broadband services using fixed wireless networks at lower cost compared to that featured when using other technologies.

Latitude said in a statement that the model was launched overseas following its success in the Philippine market, which now boasts of having the biggest broadband wireless deployment in the world.

"We have already identified key markets for our products and services, and have already established partnerships with interested parties," Latitude senior vice president for sales Irving Dakota said.

"Latitude is now in advanced talks with industry players in emerging markets such as Indonesia, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Indochina areas in some parts of Uzbekistan and across Africa," he added.

Established in early 2000, the people behind Latitude, led by its president and CEO Victor dee Bolandino, are the same team who founded Mervilion Telecoms, the WiMA specialist that was later acquired by Smart Communications in 2004.

Mervilion built the present network in the Philippines that capped a more than one million subscribers in 1,000 base stations, serving 200 metro and cities nationwide. Now with over 80,000 wireless broadband residential connections since launch last year, the Philippine experience clearly demonstrates the power of wireless as a solid platform to deliver broadband Internet services.

"Today, the clear choice to enable Fixed Broadband Services for emerging markets with limited copper facilities is Fixed IMA technology Mervilion said during the Broadband Wireless Week at the annual Wireless Broadband Week in Singapore on Oct. 3 and 4, where ABS Pro was launched.

"Even with the promise of mobile broadband wireless technologies like 3G/HSDPA, these solutions are still incapable of serving the requirements for fixed broadband DSL-like services today," Bolandino said.

"We believe that the technologies we have developed in Latitude Broadband will prove crucial to other service providers being able to leapfrog the competition and more cost-effective Broadband Wireless solution," said Ruby Tella, Latitude's marketing head.

TAKE YOUR FOREIGN CURRENCIES TO SOLID GROUND.

Invest your euros, british pounds, dollars and other foreign currencies in BPI Foreign Currency Time Deposit.

Investing in BPI Foreign Currency Time Deposit means banking on the solid reputation of the country's most stable financial institution, Bank of the Philippine Islands. With over 150 years of experience and consistent leadership in consumer banking, investment banking, asset management and real, and corporate banking. Truly, a solid partner like BPI can give you healthy returns on your foreign currencies.

Take your investment to the leader, BPI.

BPI We'll take you farther.

Notice to the public

There have been reports recently that Zurich International Life and/or Zurich Financial Services have been actively soliciting life assurance business in the Philippines.

For the protection of the public, and in agreement with the Insurance Commissioner of the Philippines we want to make it clear that these reports are not correct:

- Zurich Financial Services and Zurich International Life have no presence in the Philippines, have appointed no agents in the Philippines and are not authorised to transact or to solicit life assurance business in the Philippines.
- Any person or organisation claiming to represent Zurich Financial Services or Zurich International Life for the purpose of transacting life assurance business in the Philippines has no authorisation to do so.
- Zurich International Life will not accept any life assurance application from a Filipino or any Philippine resident if it is known that the business was solicited within the Philippines.

This notice is issued by the branch in Hong Kong of Zurich International Life Limited, a company established in the Isle of Man and authorised in the Isle of Man and in Hong Kong.

Zurich International Life can be contacted in Hong Kong on +852 2968 8922 or through its website at www.zurichintlife.com

ZURICH

Prudentialife Integrate

Service with Stability and Security

Dedication to excellence

Prudentialife is a pre-need and financial services company committed to helping the Filipino family secure a worry-free future.

It began operations in 1978 when a group of visionary businessmen led by Ambassador Francisco A. Alba pooled their resources and expertise to put up Prudential Life Plan, Inc. Over the years, the company expanded its pre-need portfolio by offering Pension and Education Plans, and later on created affiliate companies in the areas of financial services, memorialization, travel and leisure, and healthcare services.

With excellent products, professional bookkeeping and God-fearing officers and executives, plus its loyal and committed sales force, Prudentialife became an icon of service and stability in the pre-need and financial services industry. Prudentialife is now the country's top pre-need company as evidenced by the Securities and Exchange Commission's January to May 2006 pre-need industry ranking.

Prudentialife trust fund reaches P15 billion

To date, Prudentialife's trust fund has reached the P15 billion mark, compared to only P13.14 billion the year before.

With this, Prudentialife planholders and employees are assured that the company has enough funds to pay for its obligations.

Prudentialife has already disbursed over P7 billion in plan benefits for the last ten years.

Life plan redefined with Prudentialife Integra TFM

"To be more responsive to the changing times, Prudentialife has made it a business decision to pursue an integrated plan of life by focusing on what Prudentialife does best by launching Integra TFM and responding to new products that ensure the financial and physical well-being of the Filipino family."

Jose Alberto T. Alba
Prudentialife President

In keeping with its commitment to be of service to the Filipinos with the best memorialization for their loved ones, Prudentialife developed a far-reaching plan for integrated memorial services. This involves the organized linkage of the three businesses – the Life Plan, Memorials and Memorial Parks.

To fulfill this vision, Prudentialife launched Integra TFM. It is the only life plan in the industry to provide integrated memorial services with comprehensive benefits, hence the brand Integra. The initials TFM stand for Traditional Plans, Flexi Plans and Memorial-related products, respectively.

Integra TFM is backed by the entire Prudentialife Memorial Services Group, composed of Prudentialife Life Plans, Inc., La Funeraria Paz, Inc., La Funeraria Paz-Sucat, Inc., La Funeraria Paz-Baguio, St. Therese Chapels-Iloilo, Tarlac Memorial Park, Inc., and Iloilo Memorial Park, Inc.

Supported by the finest mortuaries

In order to deliver dignified memorial services to its planholders when and where it is needed, Prudentialife has a nationwide network of over 350 branch-less offices with Certified Servicing Mortuaries (CSMs).

One call does it all. From the initial call for service, Prudentialife's professional memorial service administrator takes care of all memorial related services that the plan provides for. He sees to it that the planholder's family gets prompt, personal and professional services to free them from the additional burden of attending to the smallest funeral details in their moment of bereavement.

Your choice of life plans for your peace of mind

Prudentialife protects your family from worry at the time of need. It helps you prepare for a future that is comfortable and secure. Indeed, it's peace of mind you can count on.

Traditional Plans

Traditional Plans guarantee the administration of dignified memorial services when the need arises, regardless of future cost.

Traditional Plan Benefits:
- Easy and Affordable Terms
- A selection of plans to suit your needs
- Full Payment Guarantee
- Waiver of Installment Due to Disability
- Family Assistance Benefit
- Accidental Death and Dismemberment
- Dual Protection Benefit
- Money Back Benefit

Flexi Plans

These are fixed value life plans that guarantee the availability of funds for the administration of professional memorial services at the time of need. With this, the planholder has full freedom in designing the memorial service that he or she will.

Flexi Plan Benefits:
- Easy and Affordable Terms
- A selection of plans to suit your needs
- Full Payment Guarantee
- Waiver of Installment Due to Disability
- Memorial Services Fund
- Family Assistance Benefit
- Accidental Death and Dismemberment
- Dual Protection Benefit
- Money Back Benefit

Cremation Plans

To keep up with the modern times and with the growing acceptance of cremation in the country, Prudentialife offers cremation plans that guarantee cremation services and the provision of pre-selected urns.

Life is about choices.

Prudentialife Integra TFM

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

d Memorialization Plan

Honoring your loved ones with dignity

La Funeraria Paz
107 years of quality service

For 107 years now, La Funeraria Paz has provided the nation unmatched dignified and excellent memorial services that started with one small chapel at the corner of Calle Paz (now C.M. Recto) and Calle Almacen (now Tomas Mapua St.) in Manila where families and friends can pay their last respects to their departed loved ones.

Since its inception, La Funeraria Paz has had the honor of giving the finest commemoration to the Filipino people, especially men and women who shaped our history – among them Melchora Aquino, Apolinario Mabini, and many others.

La Funeraria Paz - Araneta

Paz offers modern, first-rate amenities and facilities. It has 28 first-class memorial chapels, the largest of which can hold up to 800 people. Two superior chapels are newly renovated for the utmost homage to your loved ones.

These chapels feature main and individual family rooms which are fully air-conditioned to offer comfort and rest to the bereaved. A service balcony is provided with pre-mix burning trays for select clients.

Paz also has the largest fleet of Mercedes-Benz and Cadillac hearses appropriate for the solemnity of the occasion.

Crematory Units

La Funeraria Paz now offers crematory services, on-call 24 hours a day. The two crematorium units can process up to six cremations in eight hours.

La Funeraria Paz continues to fulfill Prudentialife's vision – "to give the finest tribute to the memory of a loved one".

La Funeraria Paz - Sucat

Inaugurated in August 2002, La Funeraria Paz has been providing excellent memorial services to the residents of Parañaque, Las Piñas, Muntinlupa, Makati, Manila, and nearby areas of Cavite, Laguna and Batangas.

This three-story mortuary has state-of-the-art facilities with 24 well-appointed chapels and family rooms which are fully air-conditioned.

A guest elevator services all floors for greater convenience. A spacious Preparation Room is furnished with high-end mortuary equipment, including a six-body freezer.

La Funeraria Paz Sucat is conveniently located amidst the lush gardens of Manila Memorial Park in Parañaque.

La Funeraria Paz - Baguio

The Baguio branch brings to the north La Funeraria Paz's long tradition of service excellence.

It has 7 well-appointed chapels that feature family rooms thoughtfully designed to give comfort to the bereaved.

La Funeraria Paz's commitment to provide excellent services through 107 years assures your departed loved ones the most respectful remembrance, befitting those who shall take the brightest road to eternal life.

St. Therese Chapels

Prudentialife is the first pre-need company to operate a mortuary in Western Visayas through the St. Therese Memorial Chapels (STMC).

Located at Lopez Jaena St. in Molo, Iloilo City, the STMC has been providing families with the finest services and facilities through its seven newly renovated chapels with modern amenities.

Four of the seven chapels are air-conditioned and fitted with pull-out beds for additional guests, clean comfort rooms with sensor-type faucets and showers.

STMC boasts of a range of Mercedes-Benz hearses and support vehicles.

Garden of the Ascension

The Garden of the Ascension signals Prudentialife's entry into the memorial park business. The Garden of the Ascension in Tarlac City has rightfully claimed its stature as the biggest memorial park north of Manila.

In the south, Garden of the Ascension in Iloilo is proving to be another success story as its lots have been selling briskly.

Both Garden of the Ascension in Tarlac and Iloilo have magnificent gates that welcome you as you enter a place of tranquility with well-kept lawns, shade trees along wide avenues and well-lit walkways.

Garden of the Ascension offers a variety of choices ranging from Garden Lots, Memorial Courts, and Family Estates at affordable payment terms.

Offering integrated and innovative memorial park services, both Garden of the Ascension in Tarlac and Iloilo stand as testaments to Prudentialife's continuing commitment of providing excellent memorial services to the people.

Ensuring the Filipinos' financial and physical well-being

True to its vision of helping Filipinos prepare for a worry-free future, Prudentialife has launched two new products that can help them live life to the fullest by being in control financially and physically through Prudentialife Optima Funds and Prudentialife HealthCare, respectively. These new products complement Prudentialife's offering for an integrated plan of life.

With Optima Funds, Prudentialife takes its fund management expertise a step further in the area of financial services to better help the Filipino family secure the good life in maximizing financial investments through mutual fund and unit investment trust funds. Professional investment managers expertly place them in bonds, securities, stocks and equities.

Prudentialife HealthCare was borne out of the company's recognition of every individual, family and community's need to be healthy. It also addresses corporations' desire to keep their workforce in good health amidst escalating medical costs. With Prudentialife HealthCare, you can now get quality healthcare services with guaranteed medical savings benefits.

Nokia launches latest in mobile technology in Manila

NOKIA RECENTLY PLAYED HOST TO A regional launch held in the PEC forum to unveil the latest Nokia Series multimedia computer, the Nokia N95. Around 50 media from the Asia Pacific region flew in to attend the glitzy affair that promised a night of exploring and fascination.

The Nokia N95, an all-in-one multimedia computer with a pioneering dual slide design, integrated GPS functionality, a 5-megapixel camera and support for high-speed mobile networks, makes it easier to watch and record videos, listen to songs, take high-quality photos, browse the Internet, or catch up on e-mail wherever you want.

"The Nokia N95 brings a range of multimedia features together, such as a fantastic display, outstanding photo and video capability, and high-speed connectivity making it an excellent multimedia computer," said Jose Luis Martinez, Nokia vice president for sales and channel management, multimedia business group, Asia Pacific. "This single device which fits easily in your pocket can replace devices that you no longer need to carry with you, like a music player, a digital camera, PDA, or navigation device. Most importantly, the Nokia N95 is with you and connected where you want to use it."

The Nokia N95 also includes integrated GPS and the Maps application with routing engine and world maps that allow users to explore the world, find specific places or locations, and access such as restaurants and hotels in more than 180 countries.

Nokia also unveiled music editions of three Nokia Series multimedia computers, the Nokia N70, Nokia N71 and Nokia N91 8GB. The Music Range combines sleek black designs with a higher memory capacity for heightened mobile music experience appealing to the music enthusiast in everyone.

The event, hosted by no other than Dimitri Rote, featured amazing musical performances by world-class violinist Jay Crayon, Electronika Collective Manila, Hyro Music, Tribu Manila, and Bing Asencio of Juan Dalda Dream.

In full force were the Nokia Philippines team led by country general manager Fumiaki Hirata, Nokia consumer communications manager Luanne Emi, head of marketing Sandeep Khanna, and Nokia product manager Mike Smith. Also seen at the event were Hisato Hemmasaki, Nokia vice president for sales and customer and market operations, South East Asia/Pacific, Ki Jong Hong, Nokia Asia head for communications, MSI CEO's Amie Lopez, Thelma San Jose, and Raul Manzano, Manila Bulletin's Dali Yap Ki with the Lanuzas and Red Ramos, Philippine Star's Isaac Belmonte, Jil Isaac, Summit's Pauline Juan, Joanna Francisco, ABS-Interim and Vivian Soler, and Tito Yap.

FIGHT Emelia Rose Fontano the Nokia N95

PHAMARA Naman, Dim Yuan, Stanley Sun, Arthur Chan, and Stella Ang Mendiola

WORK'S Loretta Lee with Jennifer Kerpiel, Nokia director for music, games and games business programs, Nokia Multimedia, Asia/Pacific

NOKIA Asia head of communications Ai Fong Wong with Jose Luis Martinez, Nokia VP for sales and channel management, multimedia business group, Asia/Pacific

MOUNT Mayon do in D'oro and Nokia N-Gagers with Tim Yap

NOKIA corporate communications manager Luanne Emi flanked by ABS-CBN's Chito Lopez, Thelma San Juan, and Raul Manzano

SERVICE LEADERS Howard Go and Nokia account manager for Sun Rodolph Santos

N-SERVING AT the Nokia Bida Nokia Philippines country GM Fumiaki Hirata together with Mauro Montanaro, Nokia VP for sales and customer and market operations, South East Asia Pacific, and Jose Luis Martinez, Nokia VP for sales and channel management, multimedia business group, Asia/Pacific

SMART'S Dennis Salcedo, Cherry Galaya, Jerome Bautista, Karen Fongue, and Lawrence Fernie

Great perks and privileges from Globe Bida Kard

TELECOM GIANT GLOBE INTRODUCED another life-enhancing service via Globe Bida Kard. Globe Bida Kard is a bonus and discount electronic card that, for the first time, allows all Globe and Touch Mobile (TM) subscribers to get special privileges in more than 700 partner stores nationwide.

"Globe Bida Kard is Globe's response to our subscribers' desire to optimize the value of their money. As our customers, we want them to benefit from the loyalty that we can give them across a number of the most commonly used services in the country," said Gene Tanseco, Globe segment business head.

Globe Bida Kard acts much like a regular discount card but uses the hassle of keeping a plastic card in the wallet. To enjoy price cuts and special privileges, Globe and TM subscribers merely have to flash their mobile phones to participating shops. These shops are easily recognized as they display the Globe Bida Kard sign.

Globe made it convenient for its subscribers to locate all establishments that honor Globe Bida Kard. With a few keypad presses, Globe and TM subscribers can easily access a complete list of Globe Bida Kard partner merchandisers for free. Aside from providing a complete directory of participating establishments, Globe Bida Kard also informs subscribers of the perks that these merchants offer.

Participating shops are categorized into groups. Subscribers, for establishments offering bonuses and discounts on clothes and accessories; food for sweets, basic and food chains; Fun for fun and entertainment; Home for merchants catering to the whole family; Sports for athletic and outdoor venues; and travel for a roundup of hotels and travel agencies.

Attuned to the needs of the people, Globe thoughtfully chose merchant partners across the country to make up its roster of partner shops. Thus, Globe and TM subscribers get consistent advantage from establishments that span GMA, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. For a full list of merchant partners, check out the Bida Kard website http://bidakard.globe.com.ph. With its expansive partner list, every subscriber's need is addressed.

Globe Bida Kard shows Globe's commitment to empower the Filipino consumer. By making the services of the country's top establishments more accessible to the people, Globe plays an important role in enhancing lives.

To take advantage of Globe Bida Kard's benefits, register for FREE by texting BIG <blue name>.<last name>.<birthday in mmddyyyy format> to 2600. Example: BIG Juan.Dela.Cruz.01011970. Then download the electronic Globe Bida Kard for free by texting BKARD to 2600. Just flash the electronic Bida Kard message from 2600 to participating merchants establishments.

FILMEX IS PRODUCTION HOUSE OF THE YEAR Filmex was named 2006's Production House of the Year in the recent Agency of the Year Awards for 2006. The award, from Production Executives to Watch and Interview, Showcase magazine, goes to Filmex bosses Gretchen Ellis, production manager; and executive producers, from left (seated) Marijo Magbitang, Von Villareal, Raymond Red, (standing, from left) Tony Villacorta, Benny Fajilo, Mito Tambico, Emmanuel Dela Cruz, Antolin Ilagan, Rachel Montenegro and Glory Vicente.

WATCHING OUT FOR THE LA MESA WATERSHED FOR 5 YEARS Honda delivers in the areas of business and ecosystem, aside from manufacturing high-quality and environment-friendly products. Recently in safeguarding the environment. Here, again, Honda Group of Companies teamed up with ABS-CBN Foundation-Bantay Kalikasan for the rehabilitation of the La Mesa Watershed area. The Honda bus home is catalyst in addressing environmental and social concerns and has continuously promoted environmental protection and preservation in both the global and local arenas. Honda Group of Companies in the Philippines has been supporting ABS-CBN's Bantay Kalikasan since 2002. A few years, Honda officers and employees have been lending its the watershed to plant seedlings in the "adopted" hectares. In fact, the company has already adopted 13 hectares of land at the La Mesa Watershed. Some of Honda's fruits of labor are the tall and healthy Cupang and Mahogany trees planted years ago. Satoshi Sekiguchi, president of Honda Cars Philippines, Kazuhiko Ushiro, president of Honda Philippines, Inc. and Tadahiro Nishimura, vice president of Honda Parts Manufacturing Corp., led the activity. Honda volunteers planted 800 seedlings in the 3-hectare land. Although physically tired and hot, they were happy and exhilarated at the end of the activity. The three executives pledged to hold the tree planting activity annually. Bantay Kalikasan's Advocacy Partnership Program is referred to the implementation of La Mesa Watershed. With the support of groups and organizations, the quest to rebuild the shattered watershed lingers on.

FMB, ALLIED BANK TO HOLD JOINT AUCTIONS Officers of the Philippine National Bank and Allied Bank recently inked a memorandum of agreement that will enable the two financial institutions to hold joint public property auctions nationwide. The collaborative project will help these banks maximize synergistic benefits in carrying out similar components of the Lucio Tan Group of Companies. Signing the MOA are (seated, from left) Allied Bank VP Lilibeth V. Pilo II of special assets group president Reynaldo A. Macaraeg; PNB president Cesar Syquia T. Mier and SVP-Operations Jerome S. Bolivar of asset management sector. Joining them are (standing, from left) special assets group marketing officers Maria Pia Cascara and Jose Rosario Garcia, SM Region Barcelona and SVP Edmar Pagadian of Allied Bank's corporate affairs department, SVP Janette Mael Santos, SAM Yvette Go, SAM Jennifer Chavez, SVP Alfred Bautista, SVP Rolando Dalbo (sports columnist and moderator), and assistant Monica Parlan of PNB. For more information, call the PNB asset management sector at 526-2424 to 30, 864-4040 to 41 local 7019 (casa@pnb.com.ph) or Allied Bank special assets group at 818-2211 (Bel Conde Subd Service Rd. For broker accreditation, kindly call AMC Marketing at 864-4040 local 7304-405/5411 (YvetteMio@pnb.com.ph) or (ngf@abb.com.ph).

Anvil Awards deadline set October 31

THE ANVIL AWARDS FESTIVAL At the Orient" of PR was launched by the Public Relations Society of the Philippines (PRSP) Oct. 20 at Sofitel Philippine Plaza Manila in the swanky terrace of the most prestigious PR house in the country.

Now in its 42nd year, the Anvil is regarded as the most coveted and most credited award for public relations practice in the Philippines. It is conferred by a blue-ribbon panel of several jury to outstanding PR programs implemented in the previous year. Earlier, the prestige and luster of the Anvil that the Award is not given at all unless the high standards of the award are met.

All companies and PR practitioners are invited to join this highly esteemed contest. Grand Anvil winners include some of the country's foremost names such as Del Monte, Intel, Pfizer, Shell, Ayala Corp., Unilever, Getz Mitsui Corp., and the Manila Hotel's Tallowa Corp.

Interested contenders have until Oct. 31 to submit their entries to the Anvil awards committee, chaired this year by Butch Raquel, vice president of the board of the PRSP, and head of corporate communications of GMA Network Inc.

The Anvil rules and necessary forms can be downloaded from the PRSP website (http://www.prsp.ph) or obtained from the secretariat at No. 20-B, San Miguel Avenue, Ortigas Extension, Pasig City with telephone numbers 638-0814 or 638-0812.

ABS-CBN Foundation joins Worldbex for 6th World Bazaar Festival

HITTING THE TRADITION FOR THE FOURTH grandeur. On the eve of the exposition, Worldbex Services International (WSI) teams up with ABS-CBN Foundation Inc as it prepares for the 6th World Bazaar Festival slated from Dec. 7 to 17 at the World Trade Center.

Showcasing the latest shopping trends with the most affordable prices, the 6th World Bazaar Festival promises to be an enjoyable day of fun and entertainment. Highlighting the festivities are fun-filled activities like the Night Market, International Village, Playland, TV Show, as well as fashion shows, musical shows for the shoppers' tastes. World Bazaar Festival will feature a special Barbie gallery as well, showcasing the very best of Barbie Collection.

Everyone will also get a chance to be with their favorite Kapamilya stars for photo sessions and autograph signing.

ABS-CBN Foundation's Tommy Escobar will be the beneficiary of the event.

For inquiries, call 331-6588 or 331-6574 and look for Armand Bartnerline or e-mail to ltg@worldbex.com.

Advocacy and enterprise in health and leisure travel

ZONTA CLUB OF MAKATI CHARITY BAZAAR

The Zonta Club of Makati (a Rotary Foundation) will be holding its 15th Charity Bazaar on Nov. 10 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the Florida Center. This all-day family affair brings together the best conveniences in the country and from other Asian countries as well. The bazaar features 80 open-air booths. Members of the Zonta Club of Makati-Ii Lucena Foundation Inc. are to raise funds to finance their grass roots development program through skills and livelihood projects for women, pre-school for 4-6 years old beggar students, the

Fr. Corsie leads group tour to Asean

REV. FR. CORSIE LUGAPO, THE MOST ardent booking priest in leading a group tour to seven Asian countries starting Singapore, Malaysia, Macau, Shenzhen and Hong Kong. Tour 9-day tour from Oct. 30 to Nov. 7 is expected to be the most number to go with him to Europe. Fr. Corsie will stay mum and limited booking sessions to luxury for lack of churches technical places. For more details and extra number, call Sales at 8807-47/8807-49.

Vitarich boosts operations

VITARICH CORP, ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S leading poultry integrators and animal feeds producers, continues to expand business operations nationwide to serve its markets better while in the process of corporate rehabilitation.

The company recently put up a parent stock breeding farm in Iloilo to further boost its growing poultry business in Western Visayas and to help support increased livestock activities in the region.

Meanwhile, the 36-year-old agri-based firm said it is beefing up operations for expansion of its animal feeds business across the country, and is further dedicating substantial resources for research and development to pave the continuous improvement in production process and product value enhancement of its animal feeds.

The company's research center located in Motiluz, Bulacan is the first of its kind in the Philippines and was designed to provide local farmers with world-class yet affordable animal feed support solutions.

"We shall continue to develop even better products and enhanced services and look forward to reaching our vision farmers all over the country", said its chair and president Virgilio Sarmiento.

Aside from poultry supply and manufacture of animal and aquaculture feeds, the company has related business to animal nutrition and healthcare.

"We thank our customers and suppliers for their continued trust and support to the company and want them to know that Vitarich is fully committed to also grow their business in the countryside," Sarmiento added.

After overcoming a succession of adverse market conditions in the past 10 years related to its problems for rehabilitation to "meltdown in feeds and substance." Hearing of the petition is set for Nov. 6.

CDO KARNE NORTE RAFFLE PROMO DRAW

Three is good company with Sun Cellular's 'Triple Treats'

WE'VE ALL HEARD ABOUT "THE POWER OF Ten." But have you heard about the amazing power of three? Sun Cellular, the network that connects itself to giving its subscribers unbeatable choices, is at it again with another offer that will astound even the likes of Mor, Larry and Gary.

Sun Cellular's "Triple Treats" is the newest service that will bring greater value by giving more discounts to you and love of your friends as you load up on easy Sun-powered phones. Here's a triple treat: 1) Get a 30% discount on Triple Treats Starter Bundle and 2) Get a 30% discount on Triple Treats Reload Bundle and 3) Get a 30% discount on Triple Treats Load Bundle.

To join via SMS, type XBUsquare<Pass Name>Last Name>Address and send to 333. Sun will send your "Getting Closer" which you will send to your barkada and other special contacts. In order for the second and third barkada member to join the Group, key in XBUsquare<Group Name>First Name>Last Name>Address and send to 333. You may also join through the Sun Prepaid Menu. Simply dial *2300# and press Send to open the menu selection. Then double-press 2: 2:Register to Group>1:Create group > and then key in First Name>Last Name>Address. Sun will send your Group Name, which you should send to your friends.

Upon completion of your group, you and your barkada will instantly enjoy 10 percent discount on Sun Unlimited and Talk Calls purchase via SMS using your Sun regular load. And as soon as your group reaches 10 members, P250 worth of unlimited load with 30-days (included bon courting on the services acquired via SMS, Centro a Load, Give-a-Load and Reload. Monthly Required, your barkada will enjoy 20 percent discount.

So whether you're the stooges or the stupids, sign up for Sun "Triple Treats" now. Enjoy amazing savings and all the perks from Sun Cellular, the country's leading provider of best-value telecommunication services.

For more inquiries, visit the nearest Sun shop within your area or call Sun's hotline at 305-8000, or log on to www.suncellular.com.ph for more details.

KLUSENZ LAUNCHES NEW BOX DESIGN

Kimberly-Clark Professional has introduced an ergonomic new design for its Kimtex Facial Tissue line for easy, one-hand use in restrooms throughout the world. The new premium facial design is featured on Kimtex Flat and Cube facial tissues. The proprietary new box design is said to fit comfortably with current washroom and office décors. Kimberly-Clark Professional previously offered more than 70 different graphic designs in 14 countries. The first package redesign was done in 1988.

Kimberly-Clark Professional is a division of Kimberly-Clark Philippines Inc. and is located at The Enterprise Center, Makati City. Log on to www.kcprofessional.com.ph

Phinma's CSR efforts to develop future leaders

ON THE HEELS OF THE SUCCESSFUL 37TH Asian Forum on Corporate Social Responsibility (AFCSR) recently held here in the Philippines, there is once more a heightened awareness on the role of companies in the society.

Forum chair Ramon del Rosario Jr. during the event stressed businesses' ability to address social concerns, as well as the need to incorporate corporate social responsibility (CSR) into the core of their business.

As Phinma president and chief executive officer, Del Rosario is clear as an example the leading local conglomerate's increasing investments in affordable, quality education for Filipinos as the group seeks to demonstrate its continued commitment to education and to producing globally competitive young Filipinos. Del Rosario reveals that the Phinma education network is eyeing to acquire three more schools by 2008 to complete its five-university system goal.

For Del Rosario, in line with its thrusts to educate, Phinma is also implementing the Phinma Scholarship, whereby 19501 Program scholars follows in the traditions of the Fulbright and Rhodes Scholarships in the United States. Through these scholarships, Phinma is able to provide opportunities to the least privileged but capable youth of the country.

With the goal to expand the programs in the near future to cover a greater number of students, 18 qualified beneficiaries have been accepted into the scholarship for Academic Year 2006-2007.

Another "Life Can Be Better" initiative of the Phinma Group, the Phinma Student-Leadership Program aims to develop the future leaders of our country. Inviting it apart from other scholarships, the Phinma Student Scholarship provides out-of-classroom supplemental activities such as study tours, leadership conferences, outreach programs, and big Brother/Big Sister programs.

Herman Barros, one of the self-selected scholars of the University of the Philippines-Diliman, Quezon City campus, dreams of reaching in the UP College of Engineering someday and joining the industry. "I really appreciate not only Phinma's financial assistance but also its leadership programs and also Phinma scholars like me in getting to know the corporate world," he shares.

For now, one thing is for sure, Phinma has given him a shot at a brighter future. And that is indeed one good showcase of how competent CSR programs can be instrumental in transforming a lower-society for all Filipinos.

Franchise exposition's keys to convenience store success

THERE ARE FOUR CRUCIAL REASONS that drive customers to convenience stores: accessible location, customer-friendly environment, complete and well-priced offerings, and convenient store hours.

These key factors were the hot topics at the recent Mininap Franchising Exhibit 2006 themed "Raising the Bar: Aim Right! Go Beyond!" held at the Grand Ballroom of the Crowne Plaza Galleria.

As the world becomes increasingly high-tech and sophisticated, customers become more demanding and particular. Embracing the Japanese principle of kaizen or continuous improvement, Mininap believes that businesses must constantly upgrade products and services to keep up with market needs and wants. "We are able to find inspiration beyond our own industry," says Bobby Go, business unit head for Mininap Convenience Stores. "There are best practices to be found everywhere, whether in retail, manufacturing, or even in the service industry," he explains. Mininap has leveraged its success on innovative offerings. Through its fortified product line, Mininap provides customers with affordable ready-to-eat meals and snacks (such as the best-selling chicken meals and the Mininap original Sandwich), as well as convenient services.

During the exhibit, Mininap unveiled its new fortified products: Rice Toppings (Pinoy Bistek, Pork Sisig, Beef Caldereta, Chicken Teriyaki and Tropic Pork Tonkatsu with rice; Belgian Corn Sundae; Belgian White Chocolate Sundae; Banana Fries; and Taro Rootleg with calamansi dip. New combo meals and merienda packages will also be launched very soon. In addition, innovations through in-store promotions, supported by aggressive advertising campaigns, creates a buzz that translates into giving customers more reasons to frequent Mininap.

Bigger sales

Coming up with something new is what business areas are also areas primarily bigger sales. Aside from new products and services, Mininap has seen greater business enhancements with the launch of the Millenial Program, new POS software, product display patterns, new store uniforms, and Group of stores. And accounting firms. Mininap also continues to develop its equipment repair and maintenance operations as well as stock delivery services across all stores.

Service is king. Mininap business is about giving the best not only to its business partners, but also to its customers, with the thrust of providing them with total convenience. Mininap now offers new services such as mobile phone prepaid loading, mobile phone battery-charging docks, and flower delivery services. At the event, Mininap also announced upcoming services such as in-store broadband Internet facilities and bill payment counters, thereby making Mininap a one-stop destination for all-around convenience.

What makes the Mininap business standout from competitors is its commitment to serve its partners through solid marketing support, training opportunities, and learning events such as the

BSP sees no need to support peso

Currency follows regional movement; fluctuation still within tolerable limits

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG Pilipinas said that the fluctuation of the Philippine peso is within tolerable levels and still comparable with movements of other currencies in the region, making it unnecessary for monetary authorities or the monetary board to intervene in the foreign exchange market.

"[The BSP's] policy is to allow the market to determine the [exchange] rate, although we can make our presence felt in the market from time to time to smoothen strong fluctuations," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. told reporters in a briefing on Friday.

Tetangco noted that the year-to-date volatility of the peso as of Friday stood at only 3.8 percent, lower than the 3 percent of the Indonesian rupiah and of the Thai baht. The Singaporean dollar and the Korean won hit an even lower volatility rate of 1.4 percent.

"The peso's volatility is still comparable with the others," Tetangco said.

The volatility of a currency measures how aggressive it fluctuates from what is computed as the average foreign exchange rate.

Volatility of a currency is one of the things closely monitored by central banks, as it influences the competitiveness of a country's business environment. A currency with high volatility makes it difficult for businesses, especially exporters and those that import raw materials for their operations, to program their cost and income.

In terms of the annual rate of change, the peso hit 6 percent as of Friday, where the peso closed at 50.105 to the dollar. Tetangco said the rate of change was at the lower end of the 5.7- to 9.9-percent range in the region.

The rate of change for the Thai baht was at 5.9 percent; Indonesian rupiah, 7.2 percent; Singaporean dollar, 5.9 percent, and Korean won, 8.7 percent.

In September, the peso's share of 58.21 to a US dollar was far stronger than the 58.61 posted in the same month last year.

The peso's appreciation, marked by the recent drop to the 49-to-a-dollar level, has prompted some members of the business sector to believe that the BSP should undertake some market intervention to avoid the hasty strengthening of the local currency in the final outrage of exporters.

But the BSP-on his does not see any sufficient reason to intervene in the market.

Tetangco noted the controversial that were made at the end of the recent Competitiveness Summit. He said competitiveness is dictated not largely by the currency, but by many other factors like level of infrastructure, availability of skilled labor and access to credit, especially by micro, small and medium enterprises.

He said improving macroeconomic indicators, such as economic growth, easing of inflation and declining budget deficit of the government would attract investments in Bangko sentral, thus help in the strengthening of the peso.

He reiterated though that the BSP would only intervene in the movement of the exchange rate if fluctuations were deemed to have reached higher-than-average levels.

Credit card firms set out to stop separate pricing

CREDIT CARD COMPANIES want government to penalize business establishments that charge customers higher prices if they purchase goods and services using credit cards instead of cash.

"Stores should be the same when but the purchase is made using cards or cash," said Rolando Tinchueco, chair of the Credit Card Association of the Philippines (CCAP). "That is the agreement between credit card companies and merchants."

Tinchueco said during the group's anniversary conference held on Friday that the CCAP would push for the immediate passage of either of two pending bills that will spell out the penalties or business establishments that set two different prices for the same products or service to the disadvantage of credit card holders.

The bills were filed last year by Representatives Jose Salvador and Israel Lagman.

Currently, the Department of Trade and Industry monitors the very business establishments price their merchandise.

But Tinchueco said that the practice of setting of a higher price for purchases made using cards is rampant, especially among appliance stores.

Because enforcement of separate charging has yet to be strengthened, Tinchueco said, what credit card companies could do was to dialogue with concerned business establishments. If talking does not work, then some credit card firms will be forced to cut business ties with the merchant, he said.

"Merchants should realize that, by accepting cards, their sales will increase," he said. "If [a merchant] limits itself only to cash, then revenues will also be limited."

Some business establishments charge a higher price in a customer using a credit card because of the cost entailed in accepting credit payments. But Tinchueco said merchants accepting payment in credit only have to pay a very "minimal" processing fee to the credit card companies, and that the cost of the fee would be more than compensated by the expected increase in sales for accepting credit card payments.

The fight against separate pricing is one of the CCAP's agenda as it celebrates its 25th year anniversary.

Another problem facing the credit card industry is delinquency among credit card holders who fail to pay their obligations on time.

CCAP said it has established a credit information bureau of its own to protect their members from bad credit clients. The group said there are about 300,000 credit card holders included on the credit information bureau's blacklist.

Once an individual is placed on the blacklist of the credit information bureau, that person will have a difficult time acquiring new credit, the group said.

Tinchueco said a credit card holder would be placed on the blacklist if the person's liability whatever the amount, remains unpaid for at least 150 days after the due date. Michelle V. Remo

BUSINESS Monday

E-mail: business@inquirer.com.ph

Business/Features Editor
Margie Quiroga-Aquino

TWINHEAD

₱49900

SCHOOLS offering medical transcription courses are proliferating all over the country.

Opportunities in medical transcription

Numbers look good but getting into the biz not that easy

By Eduardo A. Morato Jr.
Professorial Lecturer, Institute of Management

BUSINESSES ARE OUTSOURCING AND jobs are growing in the medical transcription industry.

This year, the number of companies engaged in medical transcription has risen to 40 from 30 just two years ago. The number of jobs rose from 3,000 to 5,000 over the same period.

Due to this enormous expansion, schools offering medical transcription courses are proliferating all over the country.

Medical transcriptionists listen to dictated recordings of physicians and other healthcare professionals and convert them to medical records, reports and correspondences using computers and

CONTINUED ON B2.3

Identity crisis in our universities

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Dr. Nicolo S. Pobleador

THE FACULTY FORMER ASSOCIATION OF professionals, Philippine Business for Education (PBEd), has sounded off the clarion call to address the dismal state of Philippine education.

The business leaders that comprise this organization are best positioned to know that our educational system is simply not producing the knowledge resources that this country so desperately needs to compete effectively in a global, information-driven business environment.

There are countless reasons for the sorry state of education. One that certainly stands out is the failure of universities in social institutions to play their mandated role in society.

I shall argue here that universities in this country, with rare exceptions, have become ineffective in their social roles because they have lost their sense of mission and have become insensitive to their responsibility in addressing the crying needs of Philippines society.

Universities today are suffering from what could be termed as an identity crisis.

Most of them operate as quasi-business organizations funded by individuals, religious organizations, or private foundations that serve as the equivalent of shareholders in business corporations.

This group of stakeholders is entitled to the residual incomes of the universities, however, these returns on invested capital are labelled.

As a social institution, however, the universities serves society and its many other stakeholders in many other conflicting ways.

Traditionally, the university has had the important role of serving as repository of human knowledge and culture.

In this capacity the university is seen to having a maintenance function, that of insuring continuity of the community's cultural heritage, its knowledge and technological base, social mores, values, beliefs and traditions.

By all outward indications—the recent nursing board examinations scandal, for example—many universities are woefully unaware of their role in preserving our endowed heritage and the human values that have long been part of our culture.

Social role

The university has yet another important social role. The university must also serve as an agent of change for society.

This function of the university has in recent years assumed greater importance due to the dramatic transformation in social, political and economic organization brought about by the information revolution, changes that are taking place as an ever accelerating pace.

As a major player in the creation and dissemination of knowledge, the university plays a key role in helping individuals, communities and other institutions adapt to these changes.

Indeed, the university itself must also learn to adapt to these changes. Regrettably, universities in this country have been remiss in fulfilling their social function as active participants in the change process.

In today's fast-changing and increasingly complex society, universities must also serve the conflicting interests of their many other stakeholders. Among the direct beneficiaries of the universities' activities are their students and the prospective employers of their graduates.

Free enterprise education

Most universities in the country today are dominated by "market drives" and produce the types of knowledge and compe-

CONTINUED B2.3

All about virtual malls

Are Filipino consumers ready for online shopping?

By Chipi Buenafe
PC Magazine Philippines

GOING TO THE MALLS IS FUN and cool. Will virtual malls be any different?

There are many virtual shopping malls on the web today. Virtual malls contain most of the things that traditional malls have. The obvious difference is that virtual malls enable consumers to shop while sitting in front of the PC in the comfort of their homes. The most popular examples would be www.amazon.com and www.landsend.com.

A virtual mall is a collection of different virtual shops. Like traditional shopping malls, virtual malls categorize their shops and products to make it easier for customers to navigate the site. Customers are given one online shopping cart that they can use during their visit.

One current problem with Philippine e-marketplaces and virtual shops is the lack of promotion and visibility. Not many people know about them, although there are people could be aware of and actually buy from shops sites such as www.ximano.com. This may soon change. While there are very few virtual shops in the Philippines at the moment, greater awareness may soon make it feasible to open a full-scale virtual mall.

Advantages

First, virtual malls do not require the customers to physically visit the site. This allows the customers to save on time and travel expenses. Customers can browse without having to walk a single step to find the products they need. This is much more convenient than walking around and visiting several physical shops.

Second, online shoppers do not have to carry anything while shopping for different items. This is particularly helpful when one is shopping for many items in appliances. The virtual mall will take care of the delivery of the purchased products to the customers.

Third, customers will not have to worry about parking spaces and fees. Nor will customers have to worry about navigating through crowded shops.

Online shoppers can also finish their shopping by placing all the items in a virtual shopping cart. Payment comes at the end of your shopping spree and it is a one-time thing.

Security issues

The payment schemes of present state virtual malls are sufficiently secure since most of them accredit PayPal, which serves as a third party in online transactions between two parties. PayPal and local providers such as TeleBusiness keep the financial information of its members private and secure. This means online sellers do not have access to this information. Payment providers also prevent unauthorized users from accessing the accounts of its members.

While online transactions can not be 100 percent safe all the time, both online malls and payment providers take steps to ensure safe and secure transactions. Another caveat is that customers have to be careful about their passwords and other private data that they send over the Internet.

Since there is no real-time way for customers to ensure that items they paid for will be delivered, it is advisable to do business only with established virtual malls such as Myntals.com, Deinsta.com or SMI.com.ph. Reputable virtual malls will only send out items upon confirmed payment and take extra measures proper delivery. They will also handle returns, if any.

Disadvantages

Most virtual malls require that their customers have a credit or debit card. This means that customers who do not have their own credit card cannot do online shopping on their own. This limits the market of virtual malls.

Another issue is that online shoppers cannot physically inspect and touch the items they are buying. In a culture where touch, feel and even smell play a role in the purchasing decision, this is a drawback. Even if there is usually a guarantee on items bought, it's still a bother for customers to return defective items and make delivery of the replacement. Fortunately, reputable online malls take returns and refunds seriously and attend to them. One other thing: there's no such service as a virtual mall delivery guy, customers will have to know their exact sizes.

While it's more convenient to window shop online, many virtual malls cannot display full images of products until the customer clicks on a small thumbnail. Online malls have to be weary about bandwidth limitations.

Finally, physical malls offer real-time shopping. Shoppers get what they want as soon as they pack the items up and pay for it. Virtual malls will first have to verify orders before actually sending the products out. On the other hand, it is this ability to sell and deliver to distant locations that is also the primary advantage of virtual malls.

For examples of growing local virtual shops, check out www.store-town.ph and www.bookbookstore.com.

Gild.com.ph is mainly an online directory of different businesses while www.bookstore.com is the online version of the country's biggest bookstore chain. While there are less products offered, these sites are good starters of a potential booming e-marketplace in the country.

Customer's choice

On one hand, virtual malls make it a lot easier for people to shop. On the other, there are still a number of things that can only be done by going to a physical mall. While online shopping is more convenient in many ways, it is not necessarily fun(n). It is advantageous to shop online for items one immediately needed such as books, furniture, and computer games. In the end, the customer is always right, and the customer will decide whether it's better to go online or money along one to a brick-n-mortar mall for a particular item.

Learn more about virtual malls and store your Christmas shopping early with PC Magazine Philippines. Under November 2006 issue, PC Magazine Philippines' holiday Tech Guide covers shops for the best tech presents you can give this holiday season. Find out the best digital camera that's within your budget. Check out the e-commerce articles on networking blogs and online payment solutions. To get more out of technology, grab the most widely read tech magazine in the country.

Managing networks made easy with Intel's vPro technology

By Abigail L. Ho

CHIP GIANT INTEL CORP. IS GIVING INFORMATION technology managers more power in managing enterprise networks as well as more time to spend on innovation with the release of its Intel vPro technology in the country.

Jonathan Ong, marketing manager for Intel Asia Pacific's digital office platform marketing group, called the vPro technology "the game changer for business desktops" as it provided built-in manageability, proactive security and energy-efficient performance.

Citing a Gartner study, he said 80 percent of a company's IT spending usually went to maintenance and only 15 percent went to innovation. It cited the numerous manual processes involved in managing enterprise networks as one of the key inhibitors to innovation.

With the vPro technology, he said IT managers need not do as many desk-side visits whenever something happens to an individual user's PC, freeing up time for other things.

The second generation of the Intel Active Management Technology, which comes with the vPro platform, brings to desktops many remote management functions that previously existed only on servers, including remote access to asset and diagnostic tools even when the PC is turned off, and the implementation of virtual software appliances to enhance the security and reliability of corporate PCs.

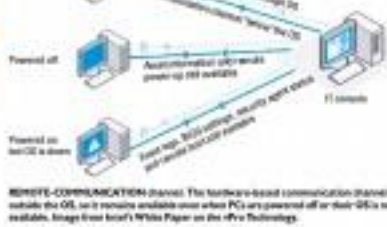
Remote management allows IT managers to address PC problems without having to go to the users encountering such problems. PC tweaking can be done even when an individual user has shut down his terminal, reducing user downtime.

The vPro platform also provides hardware-assisted virus protection, which allows antivirus software makers to exploit embedded filters to better protect network-connected PCs.

The antivirus software has also been moved away from the client PCs, Ong said, eliminating the risk of accidental disablement of antivirus software by individual users.

With Intel's Core 2 Duo at the heart of the vPro technology, he said corporate PCs could deliver up to a 40-percent increase in performance and a 40-percent increase in energy efficiency.

"Very simply, vPro is a change of course in the way businesses and IT managers view and use PCs. We are pushing in features that address what plagues businesses most — security threats, cost of ownership, resource allocation, asset management and uptime — into a single platform," Intel Microelectronics Philippines country manager Ricky Razonig said.



REMOTE-COMMUNICATION channel. The hardware-based communication channel runs outside the OS, so it remains available even when PCs are powered off or their OSs is not available. Image from Intel's White Paper on the vPro Technology.

Opportunities ...

From page B1-1

auditory devices.

Their transcribed outputs become permanent records of patients' medical histories.

Aging of America

The global market for outsourcing medical transcription (MT) is mainly propelled by the United States, which patterned law in 1996 "to improve the portability and continuity of health insurance...to combat waste, fraud and abuse in healthcare, to improve access to long-term care..."

The law recognized the aging of America and the tremendous upsurge in health expenditures, which ballooned to $1.7 trillion in 2004. As a result, hospitals and clinics began outsourcing their easy MT stuff to outsourcing BE to local and offshore providers.

In 1990, Americans visited healthcare providers at the rate of 2,900 appointments per 100,000 population. This increased to 5,200 transactions in 2005.

This meant 98 billion transcribed MT lines (at 80 lines per visit) with a value of $13.8 billion. Number of visits are projected to climb to 4,773 to 205.8 with the corresponding volume of 138 billion lines and value of $13.3 billion (Source: Al Silliano, Asian Institute of Management.)

Roughly 105,000 medical transcriptionists are hired in the United States although another 100,000 or so may be providing such services.

The dearth of MT manpower in America has fostered some of the BE companies to outsource this function. India has been able to grab the lion's share (at 80 percent) of the $3.20 million offshore outsourced BE business.

This amount is small compared to the total BE market of $149 billion.

Concerns

Security, quality and delivery concerns of BE hospitals and physicians have limited the MT offshore outsourcing opportunity despite the fact that Indian companies can provide the service at a very low cost of $0.04 a MT line compared to the US rate of $0.14a line.

However, the tremendous price differential will convince American entrepreneurs to seek more and more foreign subcontractors.

The Philippines has a long way to go before it can boast up with India which contributed 2.3 billion lines or 2 percent of the US market in 2004.

The low wages and high average productivity of Indian MTs (600 average lines per day) make it a daunting competitor. The high or the productivity of an MT line, the more it can comprehensively price.

For example, a productivity level of only 300 lines per day means that the MT service provider must price at $0.05 per line in order to get the same return on investment. A still lower productivity of 200 lines per day will have the price to go up to $0.07 per line. (Vitton, KIM)

Stringent requirements

Philippine MT companies must comply with the stringent requirements of US outsourcers. They demand an accuracy level of 98 percent from their subcontractors.

This means that MTs must be well versed in English, they must understand medical terminology, anatomy and physiology, and computerized diagnostic procedures, pharmacology and treatment assessments.

They must comply with specific style, legal and ethical standards. This requires good, rigorous MT training. However, the rewards are great.

For highly productive and accurate MTs who are able to churn out 1,000 lines a day, they can earn as much as P50,000 a month. The take home pay is, of course, much less for shorter transcriptionists.

Can it or not 600 lines a day with least pay ranging from P15,000 to P35,000 a month. Incentives run from P0.50 to P1.40 per line depending on the accuracy level.

An interview with the managers of MT, including the first Trade registered and largest MT school revealed the following information.

The accuracy and productivity requirements of US firms demand a lot of skilling. Because of this, MTC Academy runs the largest MT training in the country.

For high school graduates, there is the Basic Medical Transcription course which runs for 14 months plus four months of on-the-job training. For non-medical college graduates, the Intermediate MT course is shorter at six months with three years for OJT.

For students with already medical backgrounds, the course runs for four months with two more for OJT while medical doctors take only three months with one month for OJT. Fees for the short course are at about P22,000, climbing to P56,000 for the nine-month course.

There are about 27 schools offering MT courses in the Philippines, some of them branching out to many parts of the country. MTC Academy boasts of 32 branches. Their graduates have the possibility of getting placed on jobs offered by client-accurate companies.

Around 70 percent of the schools graduates have found MT jobs, compared to less than 50 percent two years ago. This indicates more job availability in the industry.

However, not all students obtain their diplomas. English deficiency is a major stumbling block. Complicated medical jargon is another.

Medical transcription opportunities may abound but only if the entrepreneur finds the right US partners and is able to meet their exacting quality and productivity standards. The business is not just for anybody with the money. It is a global game with global competitors playing to global standards.

Identity crisis in our universities

From page B1-1

courses that are in demand by students and employers. As a rule, students enroll in courses that they perceive will enhance their "employability."

However, in reality,up (have perceived immediate needs of their students, universities fail to provide them with the basic knowledge and competencies that are essential for life long learning and personal growth.

Without these personal skills, they are unable to continue learning after they leave the university, and they will fail to achieve their full potential as productive members of their organizations and of the community.

The demand of most prospective employers is typically for this types of knowledge, skills and capabilities that are considered "useful" and "practical" for the organization.

But too many employers actively seek creative, innovative and critical minded graduates because they tend to be "invaluable" and future improvisers.

We, ironically, like precisely is the type of knowledge workers that organizations need for their long run survival in today's fast changing, highly complex, and continuously evolving world of knowledge.

Moral obligation

I believe that the university has the moral obligation to change the misplaced "perceptions of their "customers," and to convince them that their long run interests, and those of society, depends on a different type of knowledge and value orientation than what they have long been accustomed to demand and to pay for.

The faculty comprises yet another important group of stakeholders in any university. Its professional teaching staff constitutes the university's collective mind and soul, and its main workforce in service delivery.

In addition to chronic increases that satisfy their basic economic needs, professors must also be provided with ample opportunities for professional development and the wherewithal for leading wholesome, productive lives.

Long-term interest

This in the long run is in the interest not only of the faculty, but instead, of the university itself.

A final group of stakeholders in the university, paradoxically is the really part of the solution, are the individuals and organizations that invest the needed funds and resources.

This group of stakeholders typically requires their appointed agents—the trustees and boards who manage and administer the university "to turn a tight ship," as the expression goes, and exert pressures on them to maximize organizational efficiency and effectiveness.

Regrettably, by being too focused on achieving short-term, measurable results, university administrators frequently compromise not only the long-run interest of the "owners" but more importantly, those of all the other stakeholders in the university as well.

There are no hard and fast rules for solving this crisis. In the ultimate analysis, much depends on enlightened academic leadership and a high sense of moral responsibility among those who make the critical choices, both in and out of the university.

There, regrettably, appears to be in short supply in this all-important sector of our society.

(The article reflects the personal opinions of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines. The author is an active academic and a knowledge management consultant. Feedback at mapes@globelines.com.ph)

Lightweight yet tough notebook PCs from HP Compaq

By Abigail L. Ho

BUSINESS USERS SEEKING a light-weight yet tough notebook PC may have finally met their match with the HP Compaq nc2400 notebook PC, the latest addition to Hewlett-Packard Philippines' business notebook portfolio in the country.

Ian Reyes, marketing development manager at HP Philippines' Personal Systems Group, says the new business notebook can withstand coffee or water spills and are tough enough to be carried around anywhere.

Designed with the frequent traveler in mind, the HP Compaq nc2400 is the company's thinnest and lightest notebook to date, with a starting weight of less than 1.5 kilos. While as thin as 24.8 millimeters, it has a 12.1-inch widescreen display with a large viewable area and an integrated optical drive.

HP Philippines has also launched the HP Compaq tc4400, which is configurable as either a notebook PC or a convertible Tablet PC.

It offers a 12.1-inch XGA display with a 180-degree wide viewing angle. Its optional swivel-to-display allows users to clearly see their screens even in daylight conditions when screen glare is most pronounced.

For business users who are always on the go and who usually do not have access to electrical outlets, the HP Compaq nc4400 provides an ideal proposition as its battery life can last up to 18 hours with the HP Ultra-Capacity Battery.

Both notebooks run on Intel Core 2 Duo processors, which are designed to boost performance while enhancing energy efficiency. The notebooks are also Windows Vista-capable.

HP Professional Innovations, a hardware and software package that is designed to enhance security, improve ease of use and ensure reliability, is also incorporated into the new business notebooks.

New technologies that users can take advantage of include the HP Biometric Fingerprint System; HP Disk Sanitizer and Mobile Data Protection System 3G, which all aim to mitigate risks and increase user productivity.

The HP Compaq nc2400 series go for P99,950, while the HP Compaq tc4400 series has a starting price of P139,950.

Money in the Bank

By Ernesto Bagcas, Intel Asia Pacific Financial Services Vertical Industry Manager

Financial services companies are demanding mobile, fluid and nimble solutions. They are discovering that because value propositions are always changing new technologies without the infrastructure restrictions or inflexible structures that burden traditional systems mean better performance, better manageability and more security, all help front-office staff perform their jobs – and deliver the important news immediately to the bank's banking customers.

Quite the buzz is still towards a more complete customer experience and convenience. In many banks, tellers are required to perform cross-selling activity at the window, without relying on a separate set of sales tools for every cross-opportunity. This new approach lets tellers and bank staff bring data to quickly access and analyze customer information. It also needs a single source of truth when it comes to information on the customer's profile and their financial objectives.

Moreover, other non-bank investment banks are also able to generate a single window view customer data. A new breed of investment centers provide proposals, flag new special offers to the tellers, or suggest other products that fit the customer's profile.

A new breed of high performance PCs can now help to close the new opportunities. They can run a variety of specifically tailored marketing applications which focus the opening selling or cross-selling opportunities under the point of customer contact.

Financial advisors in bank branches also benefit from highly specific yet compact tailored e-applications, similar to those used to support mobile financial advisors, but can access the same applications to increase customer visibility, improve cross-selling rates and increase wallet share.

High performance desktop PCs also offer several benefits for financial traders and investment salespersons. Using connected PCs, traders can get real-time information that can help bank staff seize short-term market opportunities and make best-case investment/sales/trade decisions.

Financial services firms require investment management and security technologies that enable an appropriately tailored combination of agility and capability. With the new breed of powerful desktops, staff can enjoy a seamless experience as they multitask across multiple demanding applications while bank security and management tasks continue to execute in the background.

Several transactions amounting to millions of dollars and containing confidential client data are transacted on a daily basis. Using new distributed applications, software experts have collaborated with hardware RAID teams to solve security issues posed by desktop mainframe document and access by the company's many employees from e-applications.

Now, critical security applications can move the background to a virtual partition which runs independently of the operating system and is within the client operating system (OS) environment. This approach keeps vital security processes isolated from potential OS security compromises and ensures they are included from the start – such as viral attacks. Updates and security management can even be managed while the machine is powered down to the exact moment an antivirus and firewall is taking.

IT managers can also easily monitor files to upgrade to security. It brings remote management techniques to the desktop that previously only existed on servers.

The New Solution

The new solution brought relief to the financial services industry's highly varied demands on PCs, with Intel® vPro™ technologies. Provided as an enhanced, standardized system, it includes integrated hardware and software security features with the second-generation Intel® Core™2 Duo processor technology (Intel® AMT) built into the chipset, and Intel® Virtualization Technology (Intel® VT). Intel® VT is integrated into the new dual-core Intel® Core™2 Duo processor featured in every PC with Intel vPro technology.

These hardware innovations, when combined with software from leading security vendors, can provide a new level of security, management and energy efficiency together with reduced operating costs and increased user-level functionality. Intel AMT can help manage, inventory, diagnose and repair PCs even they are turned off or experience OS or hard drive interruptions.

BUSINESS Monday

Where the rich go when they need cash

It's not just the poor and middle class who run to pawnshops

THE RICH DO in special pawnshops that look more like a fine jewelry store with art pieces and deep lounge chairs.

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

THE POOR AND THE MIDDLE CLASS are not the only ones patronizing pawnshops. The rich do, too.

Like their counterparts of lesser means, the rich sometimes need quick cash to tide them over until the next windfall. And they believe going to a pawnshop is a cheaper and faster alternative to either selling land, withdrawing time deposits or taking out a loan.

The only difference is that the rich patron high-value items, such as designer bags, signature Swiss watches, diamond rings of at least one carat, fashion jewelry and even house theater systems, in exchange for loans that range in the six figures.

And the affluent do not go to the friendly neighborhood pawnshop, such is exquisite turf and luxury cars.

They instead go to those that specialize in appraising and securing expensive items, such as Agencia de Empeños de Makati Inc., that look more like a fine jewelry store with its art pieces and deep lounge chairs where guests are treated to Latvalata coffee.

Agencia proprietor Hilke Tolosa tells SocioBiz in an interview that pawning high-value items is actually part of the lifestyle of the affluent in Southeast Asia, and is starting to pick up in the Philippines.

Contrary to popular belief, the rich do sometimes run out of cold cash.

"Even everyone still need cash

Firm talks about its secret on developing people

EPG FOUNDER JIM CASEY ONCE said, "You (a company) cannot be successful entirely through your own efforts. All of us, if we are to accomplish anything worthwhile, will do it largely through the help of and cooperation of the people who work with us."

The firm tries to reflect in marketing line "Deliver more!" to all aspects of operations.

The company's history has drawn leadership and vision in designing programs to recruit, retraining and developing its people. The leadership and vision is extended and felt by employees in EPG Philippines.

Tenure and compensation

Belly Sitoya, EPG Philippines HR Manager, says the firm has a low turnover rate since it started operations in 1997. The average length of service of its employees is five years. "In fact, out of the current 471 employees, 360 of them are pioneer staff who have been with us since EPG began our operations in the Philippines," Sitoya says.

"We believe in creating the right incentive for our employees to keep them motivated, and ultimately happy and comfortable in their working environment," Sitoya added. "This comes in the form of our competitive compensation packages. We developed annual wage plans using compensation surveys conducted by two leading companies and benefits consultants to the country. On top of that, EPG emphasizes a variable bonus plan in accordance with its business results and employee performance."

Promote from within

EPG observes a system of "promoting from within."

"As a company, we practice a policy wherein our people is the first priority should an opportunity for career advancement comes along. If there is a vacant position, we try to provide that opportunity to a qualified applicant within the company before we recruit someone externally," shares Sitoya.

Sitoya adds that "EPG encourages its people to foster a voice in the company. They are encouraged to speak up and state their opinions and thoughts."

The firm follows a consistent system which is aligned with its internal tool "Balanced Scorecard"—a strategic measurement and management system that translates the company's mission and strategy into a comprehensive set of performance measures. Its senior management conveys the company's vision and goals to the regional offices. These goals will then be adjusted to better suit individual countries before passing on to the designated country offices in the framework for performance and employee motivation.

OUT OF UP? 'Philippines' 471 employees, 360 are pioneering staff.

"But more than anything, we believe in developing our people. It's one thing to get through a day by working and delivering requirements, but it's definitely another to go through that same day with a conscious effort to learn something new," concludes Sitoya.

By studying their performance and capabilities, the management is able to put its people in the right training and development programs to mold them into better workers and enhance their learning and performance output.

EPG is the world's largest package delivery company and a global leader in supply chain services, offering an extensive range of options for synchronizing the flow of goods, information and funds. Headquartered in Atlanta, USA, EPG operates more than 200 countries and territories worldwide. EPG's stock trades on the New York Stock Exchange (EPG) and the company can be found on the Web at www.epg.com.

Where the rich go . . .

From page B1-1

nonetheless, are under it easier and more comfortable for them, "he says.

Dizon says the rich sometimes passes their possessions for just a short while. Even as short as a day to about a month, and the key to getting their items is to ensure that their items will be taken care of and that they get a good price for them.

For this reason, Dizon and his key staff go through training to properly appraise the value of these prized possessions.

Agensia is a member of the US National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors and is linked with the Gemological Institute of America.

There are also appraisal experts at Swiss watches, jewelry and diamonds, high-end boutiques, Asian paintings and other collectibles like Marquez manuscripts. Only to service these interesting clients that include chief executive officers, show biz talents, basketball players and country statesmen.

To ensure the safety of these items, Agensia installed state-of-the-art fire protection and uses the latest in security equipment.

Among the renowned Swiss watches, Patek Philippe, Jaeger-le-Coultre and Audemars Casemiro brands command the highest appraisal and are among the most traded in the second-hand market, based on his experience operating the Seconds second-hand shop in Greenhills I, Ayala Center.

Other heavily traded brands include Cartier, Rolex, Breguet, Audemars Piguet, IWC, Officine Panerai, Franck Muller, Omega, A. Lange & Sohne, Breitling, Zenith, Chopard and Piaget.

For the jewelry, it's the Harry Winston, Asscher and Whine Co. brands that are the most popular and enjoys the highest resale value.

Dizon says the value of the watches is dictated purely by the limited supply and the extraordinary artisanship of the brand.

For those who eventually want to sell their watches, he advises them to keep the box, the tools and the manuals. Without them, the pieces loses some of their value. The same goes for the jewelry.

Patches, he says, are more easily traded than jewelry. Appraising also takes a while to be sold because these need to be authenticated.

Dizon admits that the market for his kind of specialty pawnshop is small and not likely to grow in fact as his second brand shop for retail, but he is happy to service the market because it is steady and less risky than the ordinary pawnshops.

Dizon envisions the difficult way or just 10 percent since the owners almost always want to get their items back.

There is such a thing as a sentimental value, after all, and there's no price tag for that.

JAEGER le Coultre

THIS JAEGER LE Coultre has a tag price of $74,000 or some P3.7 million

PRINCE ALBERT II of Monaco (6th from right) recently joined three family foundations which received the global awards for philanthropy. The three are Fundacion Lazo-Carvalho of Spain, the Ivey Foundation of Canada and the Lopez Group of Foundation Inc.

Dr. Ned Roberto's
64th Applied Marketing Research Seminar
October 26 & 27, 2006 8:30am-5:30pm
Hotel Intercon, Makati City (G/F Legaspi Room)

Learn how to make smart and profitable decisions from Dr. Ned Roberto's highly acclaimed Applied Marketing Research (AMR) seminar series. This seminar will feature real life examples based on Dr. Roberto's more than 30 years of marketing experience. There will also be new and updated modules on pricing positioning, advertising and copy testing.

Get a chance to apply Dr. Roberto's marketing research techniques on:
- Assessing advertising and promotions campaigns. With research you can make advertising accountable
- Positioning strategies, brand name and package testing
- Pricing. How to determine the price the market will accept/pay and is profitable for you
- How to find gaps effectively

Plus! Brand new material on category and store management.

AMR Seminar Outlines:
1. Basic Research
2. Test Market/Mini-Test Market
3. Concept Tests and Re-Concept Tests
4. Positioning Models & Tools
5. Product/Positioning Research
6. Product Testing
7. Brand Name & Packaging
8. Profitable Pricing Strategies
9. Accountable Advertising
10. Sales Tracking Research, Forecasting and Category Management

"Full of marketing wisdom and wit!" Betty Kapadiam, Kapamilya

"Value-packed seminar!" Lorie Hernandez, BT

"Dr. Ned's seminar is worth every second and centavo that we invested!" Rey Gonzales, JM Thompson

"By far, the most informative seminar on market research" Madison Rotung, Nestle Philippines

The AMR Seminars drew more than a 100 satisfied customers in every years of marketing education via delivery.

Microsoft

Event Partners: Summit, BCD PINPOINT

Time schedule: 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. — of marketing wisdom!
LEARNING INVESTMENT
Regular Rate: P10,977 +VAT
Walk-in Rate: P11,977 +VAT
*Please call us for special group rates!

Email us at drned@inspire.ph
*Call Pina or Juliet at 813-2732/03 for special group rates!

Greening the STAR Tollway

NESTLÉ PHILIPPINES INC. (NPI), IN partnership with Philippine Business for the Environment (PBE) and New Innovations Development Corp. (NDC), launched a new greening program, under its 42-kilometer STAR Tollway (Southern Tagalog Arterial Road) linking South Luzon Expressway and Batangas. Nestlé operations factory in Cabuyao, Batangas, which serves as its Asean Supply Center for breakfast cereals, and also produces Milo and Bear Brand milk.

The program was launched at the Southbound Exit of the STAR Tollway by private and government sector partnership led by Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Angelo Reyes; NPI Chair and CEO Nando Sandalkhoye; Jack Reyner representing PBEP Executive Director Fe Angeles; PBEP Trustee Ramon Paterno Jr., chairperson of the Philippine Daily Inquirer; PBEP Trustee Timmy Lipana, Chairperson of Mo and Lipana, Hektor Montes Hektor who represented PBEP Trustee Roberto F. Ocampo; BIR Provincial and CIO Melchor Mesarcos; Batangas provincial government Executive Secretary Sammy Mercado representing Gov. Armando C. Sanchez; and Nestlé Batangas Capitan Director Plant representing Tanauan Mayor Sonia Ingente.

Dubbed "Greening the STAR Tollway," the program aims to green the eight trees on both sides of the tollway in line with the DENR's Green Philippines Highways Campaign, a multi-sectoral effort to plant more than 100,000 seedlings and saplings along the country's major roadways. The importance of greening trees along these roadways had been highlighted, since some 70 percent of local air pollution is attributed to vehicular emissions. According to experts, to counteract current levels of such pollution, each of the owners of the country's 1 million motor vehicles should plant at least 10 trees to absorb carbon dioxide and act as oxygen.

Secretary Reyes recognized the private sector's key role in promoting the environment at the launch. "I congratulate the private sector groups for getting together, working and uniting together towards this end. In the DENR, we only wish to say well done; we cleared the dirty job done. The task is enormous. We need to have the burden shared. We need a common vision and shared responsibility," he said.

Nestlé Philippines Chair and CEO Nando Sandalkhoye said that with the cooperation of the NDC and PBEP, the planting of trees along the entire STAR Tollway is expected to be done by year-end. "We are confident that this project will increase environmental awareness, and inspire others to plant more and contribute meaningfully in making the Philippines a clean and beautiful place to live in," Sandalkhoye said. The company's activities are guided globally by The Nestlé Environmental Management System (NEMS), a comprehensive framework that provides procedures and standards for protecting the environment in all business activities. Nestlé's long-standing emphasis on environmental protection, as part of its broader commitment to contribute to the good of communities, plays a central role in its business operations.

As a private sector initiative, Nestlé's "Greening the STAR Tollway" aims to upgrade to the call to tap alternative biofuel sources to address the country's dependence on imported fuel. Jatropha is a multi-purpose oil-bearing tree. Jatropha oil can be used as an alternative fuel and is being tested as a potential replacement to diesel for trucks and cars. The brown seed husk of the tree can also stand in on coir, swelling upon the dust protection and quality, and as a raw material for making soap and even insecticides.

NPI CHAIR and CEO Nando Sandalkhoye joins Isabel de Jesus (left) and Rosalinda Baldoz (right) planting the first tree seedling as he celebrated during the launch of the "Greening the STAR Tollway" program.

China Bank's 9% p.a. home loan rate is still the lowest

Remittance made easier, faster with China Bank ON-Time Remittance card

STILL THE LOWEST DEAL 9%* p.a.

CHINABANK HOMEPLUS REAL ESTATE LOAN

Get the best deal for your dream home. Avail of China Bank's HomePlus with the lowest first year rate. You can also take advantage of our incredibly affordable longer payment terms. Whatever your plans are, we can help you realize them.

Interest Rate Fixing	Interest Rate (p.a.)
FIRST 1 YEAR	9.00%
FIRST 5 YEARS	10.75%
FIRST 10 YEARS	11.00%
FIRST 15 YEARS	11.25%

Please call us for other rate fixing options.

Call 885.5555

* Guaranteed for the first year

CHINABANK

BUSINESS Monday

Reach out and ask someone

BY NATURE, LEADERS ARE DECISION-makers. The more influential the leader, the more consequential their decisions will be. Leaders are not immune because they have proven their ability to choose the appropriate course of action when faced with big decisions.

However, when a leader begins to rely solely on personal observation and intuition, that leader is headed for trouble.

Even the wisest among us has a limited perspective, and we will take important decision-making risks if we become entirely self-reliant.

In this edition of A Leader's Way, I am indebted to the brilliant thought of US. Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis, who said it. And in her book, The Third Opinion, An extremely well-written text, The Third Opinion makes the case for the value of outside insight in the performance of a leader. In her book, Dr. Jane identifies four signs that the time is right to consult decision-making advisors:

- When multiple decisions need to be made, and you don't have the required amount of time to focus fully on each one.
- When the implications of the decisions are far-reaching, and you know your organization will be in serious trouble if you don't do the right thing.
- When you lack the expertise to tackle the issue on your own, regardless of whether you have the time.
- When you are capable of taking action, but you know the decision will be better off if you consult the experiences and insights of someone else.

As a leader, once you've determined to seek advice, how do you go about doing it? How can you most effectively glean insights from the thinking of advisors?

To successfully engage others to gain insight requires ...

1. Security of the leader
2. Credibility of the process
3. Quality of the questions
4. Ability of the team
5. Security of the leader

Advice is seldom welcome, and those who need it most like it least.—Dr. Samuel Johnson

A LEADER'S WAY

John C. Maxwell

Leaders can be stubborn when it comes to seeking advice. Insecure leaders who worry about their status, position or pension tend to reject the ideas of others, protect their turf and keep people at bay. It takes a secure leader to admit their assumptions may be wrong or to defer to the expertise of another.

Secure leaders routinely practice simple, but essential exercises to benefit from the advice of others. They create an environment where the spotlight doesn't shine on them as guardians of its popularity. They listen, and they encode others with a genuine desire to learn and to broaden their vision.

Secure leaders are willing to be wrong. They defer to the strength of an idea regardless of who the idea came from. Finally, leaders share the spotlight when a decision is successful and take the blame when it fails. By doing so, they earn the trust of advisors and keep the channels of communication open for future dialogue.

Credibility of the process

"He that is taught only by himself has a fool for a master."—Ben Johnson

The decision-making process unravels when the leader gravitates toward either of **two extremes: Refusing everyone's advice** or accepting everyone's advice.

Ignoring the advice of others results in a dictatorial leader who is limited by the confines of their own perspective. Accepting all advice leads to pondering "group think," devoid of the critical thinking necessary to weed out poor or unrealistic ideas.

A wise leader builds a climate of shared thinking in which all opinions are welcome, but each is closely scrutinized before being accepted. Such a leader buys into the slogan, "none of us is as smart as all of us." Shared thinking sparks innovation by spurring multiple avenues for creative ideas rather than locking into ideas in the mind of a single leader.

Shared thinking also gives ideas a chance to mature as they are polished and expanded **in the sphere of team discussion.**

Quality of the questions

"When you stop wondering, you might as well put your rocker on the front porch and call it a day."—Johnny Carson

Perhaps the hardest part of leadership is to keep sustained focus on essential topics and data above the urgent, immediate needs. When the touch of the workday becomes urgent, leaders are distracted from following a cyclical vision and cannot ultimately from creative ideas.

Leaders devote their most precious resource—unscheduled time—to the most **important issues affecting the organization.**

They purposefully collect and inquire about opportunities that hold the greatest potential to yield highest returns over time. **The gravitational force of the workday gives** immediate tasks so much pull. In the absence of careful planning, leaders will become starved for time.

Ability of the team

"In seeking someone for advice, one of the biggest temptations is to assume that a person who verbalizes well, also analyzes well. It's not true. Loud talkers aren't always good thinkers."—Fred Smith

Wisdom is not in the multitude of voices—it's in listening to the right one. To maximize the value of shared thinking, leaders place people around the table who bring **something to the table.**

As you prepare to ask people to participate in shared thinking, use the following criteria for the selection process:

Desire ...

People whose greatest desire is the success of the ideas.

People who can add value to another's thoughts.

People who can emotionally handle quick changes in the conversation.

People who appreciate the strengths of others in areas where they are weak.

People who understand their place of value at the table.

People who possess maturity, experience, and success in the areas under discussion.

People who will take ownership and responsibility for decisions.

People who will leave the table with a "we" attitude, not a "me" attitude.

Too often, leaders select brainstorming partners based on feelings of camaraderie, circumstances, or convenience. To discover and create ideas of the highest order, the **people invited to the table of thought make** all the difference.

Let's recap. Leaders remove the lid of limited perspective from their leadership when they consult the insights of others. To successfully engage others to gain insight requires ...

1. Security of the leader
2. Credibility of the process
3. Quality of the questions
4. Ability of the team

(For information on John Maxwell's in-house or public leadership or teamwork workshops, please send an e-mail@inquirer.ph or call 813-2998/2702 and ask for Joel or Jing. Text MAXWELL ON to 4632 (Smart) to get daily SMS leadership insights from John Maxwell.)

IN THIS ISSUE
- Orlina marks 30 years as sculptor /D1
- Lindslee, Art Bernido: Top young artists /C2

LIFESTYLE
Lito Cheli Banal-Formoso
Subsection Editor Lito B. Zulueta

Adventures in abstraction

Autumn bricolage

Hong Kong gets ready for the awesome abstracts of Norberto Carating

By Angelo V. Suárez

NORBERTO CARATING'S fascination is consistent on his work is the up-coming solo show "Autumn Nights" (begins Nov. 9 at 1/99 Arthouse)—but of a peculiar sort, one who connects art with available texts but with available contexts. What is painted is not merely what is perceived but how it is perceived, the movement of the subject, such that he hints almost ostentatiously at the classic McLuhan aphorism "The medium is the message." Ultimately, his focus is inseparable from his content, because his form is content.

The linear formations and geometric juxtapositions inscribed upon layers of metallic acrylic give his work a mechanical coldness that reminds one of the Futurist glorification of the machine, of the triumph of Marinetti's roaring motor car over the Victory of Samothrace.

But, contrary to the Futurist ideal, these are machines without movement, peaceful hunks of metal in stasis—a peace-keeping army

(CONTINUED ON C2)

Fil Delacruz's ethereal but robust art

The top artist signals a transition to abstract surrealism

By Lito Zulueta

FE DELACRUZ EXPLORES MEMORIES in his new suite of paintings, "Multimata," which will be exhibited starting Oct. 26 in Balenggang Fernando Amorsolo at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (tel. 8321702). The iconography remains, but the depictions take a turn for the adventurous and the unpredictable.

(CONTINUED ON C2)

Canon
Delighting You Always

Capture great memories!
With Canon Digital Video Camcorders.

ELURA 100
ZR500
ZR600
ZR700
Only PhP 35,950
Only PhP 19,950
Only PhP 24,950
Only PhP 27,950
FREE!
DIGIC DV

Canon Marketing (Philippines), Inc. 29 Martin Plaza, 2153 Don Chino Roces Avenue cor. V.A. Rufino St., Makati City
Tel. 3849080 • Fax 8194097 • info@canon.com.ph • www.canon.com.ph

MICHAEL Cacnio's Ina and Dara

WITH Angel Cacnio

Collaborative show marks Michael Cacnio's 15th year

"ART EXCHANGE" IS A RARE EXHIBITION OF collaborative works in celebration of Michael Cacnio's 15 years as a sculptor.

Meaning their artistry are some of the country's art greats and emergent talents: Gabby Barredo, Elmer Borlongan, Angel Cacnio, Araceli Dans, Rumulo Galvezan, Normandel Geriboy, Mark Justiniani, Leo Lantion, Perlie Monterozaya, Ramon Orlina, Benjie Reyes, Ricky del Rosario, Neo Tarbaghan and Janice Young.

Also featured are tribute pieces to the late National Artists Ang Kiukok and J. Elizalde Navarro.

"Art Exchange" opens at the Elorde's Art Space, Makati City, 6 pm., on Oct. 24 and will be on view until Oct. 28, after which it transfers to Art Exchange, 3/G, Glorietta 4, and runs until Nov. 7.

The exhibit is assisted by The Artery Manila Call 7525089.

WITH Angel Cacnio

Rodel Tapaya's 'Mukha'

SEVEN ART AWARDS (FINALIST RODEL Tapaya's latest works are premiered by Blanc Art Space in the exhibit, "Mukha," which runs Oct. 20-31. The collection depicts the human face and by varied expressions—from soulful and harrowing, deleted and resigned, to sharp with trepidation and speculation and even blankness to inspire Tapaya depicts his unusual acrylic-on-burlap paintings by re-drafting smaller works on board.

The artist will soon render illustrations for a children's book published by Canvas and UST Publishing House, the same group that brought the late Resurreccion Perlas' highly lauded works to print in "Glass and Tiles Tower" and, more recently, Elmer Borlongan's nonfiction for "The Barking House."

This October, Tapaya is off to Singapore for an exhibit at Divers Art.

Call or text Blanc Art Space at 0920-9276455.

"KING Tinbo-ong si Bling Lydia"

"MAMA"

Adventures in abstraction

Autumn bricolage

From page C1

of artistic flexibility.

His depiction of the moon—a traditionally feminine icon—is a red, mechanical breast, in organic heart, needles protrusion. How does one account for the convergence of spiritual warmth with the dull exactness of measure? Where do sides figure in a circle? The artist manages this soothing defiance of absurd juxtapositions with undeniable grace.

Creating complements this irony with his use of baking implements in the production of his paintings. While cake is a fluffy substance almost purely reliant on softness to be enjoyed, it is exactly the rigidity of his work that appeals.

If the artistic process is to be taken as an act of baking, one begins to wonder what bread is, in this sense: is the very dough of Catoling's cake his canvas? But where paint constitutes the painting, it is the icing that constitutes the cake layer.

But there is departure from the rigid. Besides the curved strokes and deep lines that shatter the regularity of geometric shapes, the linear and metallic quality of his works begins to mimic the roofs of urban churches and aluminum makeshift homes—a passionate patchwork of paint and iron.

Third World glasses

These abstractions, of course, aren't shaped according to romantic notions of impotent Third World egoism; but are nonetheless perceived by eyes that laugh Third World glasses, funneled with handy neo-localism with Third World textures.

"Autumn Nights" is one of all a showcase of the perceived but a confusion of perception, of the tandem-like (but taken place in all forms of creation, an object's seen by two different objects altogether; when an image processed by Catoling is blurred, the blurs do not necessarily come from the objective scene but the subjective lookee, or in this case Catoling himself—drippy hindsight sees through drippy eyes. Even as eyesore. How are eye-drunky that the medium truly is the message.

The punk of Catoling's iconic imagination reveals itself in geopolitical terms: he'd the paintings as taken at urban shanties weren't violent enough, the artist chooses to label his collection with a foreign, removed title—alas, the Filipino child who cannot eat cake but lives in one sees abovedependence assistant But here, assistance a condition foreign to him can only be experienced at night, in sleep or in those moments immediately preceding deep 10s phase of prayer until prevailing poverty.

"Autumn Nights," therefore, is as much a bricolage as the shanties it alludes to, but they are at the opposite ends of a spectrum. While the makeshift home is visibly patchwork, Catoling's show is not—the curious draw in the former's fragmented body has to the latter the scenes are in the hidden, fractured soul.

Context rather than text—this is what the artist's abstractions bring to the fore. By taking meaning away from the visible, what is visible is socially becomes more meaningful.

Anthrotos Catoling's recent works will be exhibited at the Karin Weber Gallery at 28 Hollows Annex General Hidalgo and Road Area), Hong Kong. "Autumn Nights" will run on Oct. 26-Nov. 17. Cocktails will be served at the opening.

"NIKLO Acting"

"INCREASING Heart" 2

"TANGHAN"

Fil Delac

"KUMBAS"

FIL Delacruz with "Antong"

Normal Lindslee, friendly Bermido

THE YOUNG ABSTRACTIONIST Lindslee continues to show progress in his painting with his new show, "Finding Normal," which closes today at the Goethe-Institut Manila (Ashmann Center, 121 L.P. Leviste St., Salcedo Village, Makati, tel. 8178978 or visit www.goethe.de/manila). His latest works in mixed media attempt to define normalcy with the rather preferable paradox that, of course, nothing's truly or permanently normal.

Lindslee is himself the embodiment of that paradox. (In full name is Lindsey James Alvarez Lee, which he has truncated to something like an abbreviation and an abomination. Still a young artist in his late 20s, he has embraced abstraction in the manner of adoption.

Although he's from Tarlac and has the green, endearing traits of the South, he's very cosmopolitan in his artistic sensibilities. He seems to follow after "Since" (Sino-Pinoy) artists, notably Ang Kiukok, who have experimented in one way or another with the abstract idiom despite a certain attachment to the representational. It is all flesh to pigment for him, though.

The dichotomy owes to the breadth of his subject matter, which, based on past shows, revolves around: "Gears and effect," and "Sit," which could be Social Realism (in abstraction), or, since the works relate to living in the city with its congestion and cacophony, to "standing room only."

So it's not surprising that he should take on the theme of normalcy—or interpretations thereof—in his new show. After such rather restless (does no existential dimension) awards should settle down to the comforts of home and normalcy.

But one glimpse at the works and one knows disorder is clothed in a certain abnormality. The works have refused. Of course, the Lindslee we have come to know is the monochromatic fanatic who would rather explore shades of grey rather than check out the colors of the rainbow. So he is entirely out of character in this show.

Despite his abnormal color restraint, Lindslee shows himself and packed in his element with the palette. The coming colors he introduces to his canvas are red, black and white, with no apologies. The other colors...maybe, later. Red and his favorite gray—as it is to form.

The new colors should reassure either a new spring or a deepening interest (or both) in the artist's emotional life. "Mary Go Round" seems a cheerful title for the normally genial but restrained Lindslee. Who's Mary? Is the Lindslee's girlfriend or fling? Never mind.

The painting—a carousel of gray with a bit cream-pole of black and, on the heavy of the pole, a red spot—should make for an intriguing emotional guesswork. It's a happy painting, and also emotionally sad.

"Pics on My Fine House" has a huge square of pale sky blue on its upper half, perhaps to contrast the purity of childhood, with an inviting red at left, a splatter of black near it, and a whisp of white at the center of the blue field. Red may be the color of desire, and the black a reminder the emptiness of carnal pleasures.

Except for blue, roughly the same colors are observable in "Butterfly Effect," except that the landscape is a craggy white, with two fleshy stems/pillars at the right, on them maybe plants. Can be seen metaphors of black and red. Of course, the metaphor represents the "butterfly effect," tiny wings flapping that may cause an aberration in the atmosphere despite their size.

The last painting perhaps best represents the collection. In dealing with the butterfly effect, Lindslee seems to say that nothing's ever normal. The flapping of a butterfly's wings may represent a small change in an otherwise normal situation; but with recurrence and increasing intensity—such as Lindslee's rather obsessive and severe brushstrokes in this collection—the wings

"FINDING Normal," by Lindslee

"BUTTERFLY Effect," by Lindslee

"MICHELLE Lim," by Art Bermido

"LINDSLEE," by Bermido

"LETTING Jesus," by Bermido

Two yo
abstrac
the resi
of the g

may yet cause a storm. It's no wonder that
formally effect is part of these theory, to Lindsl
saying that the only normalcy possible is chaos

Art Bermido at Astra

Just as doomed to abstraction is Lindslee's schoolmate from UST, Art Bermido. Both artists are very pleasant to person; and Bermido is p
similarly gregarious.

In previous works, he tackled artistic mas
or niggas and embodied them in process
hard rust and felt some connection with. I
these characters were rendered in chaot
paintings with the most Zen-like purity as t
the representation eased nothing to realism
to psychological epiphany. In fact, the final
were appareled like a form fresh rust.

His latest show, "The Real Picture of Compl
cy," which will open on Oct. 27 at Galerie Ar
(2/F, LH Resident Plaza, 2317 Pasong Tamo Ex
Makati; tel. 8000980), presents more of
same drawings in washed charcoal on ar
and aquarelle papers, but with an interes
twist. They are drawings depicting his fell
artists to what should constitute as an emerg
artist and is knowledge to a richer competitive
more serious field.

Bermido's bias for the psychological result
"Philippine art today is severed by an imagin
line that divides artists and groups by beh
ses, "but says in his notes. As a result, "artificial
periods and discrete fades, creating a gro
for subversionist development."

So what does he wish to do? "Albeit a n
player, my experiences subjected me to
shroud it, I not confidant, at least consistent
hostile environment," he writes. "Join me in
quest for unity, sincerity and tragedy by us
red hearts so that people will know you are
to be subversionist by behavior."

Therefore, the works framed in red shad

"KABUTO"

ruz's ethereal but robust art

Details page C1

"KALIKALI" I

In "Hanging," one canvas is a marble spirit of heaven and earth, with the ochre browns predominating, and the heavens even grainy-milled by the embarcaderos; "Sun, Storm" has some shadow prevalence here in most of Delacruz's works, but with the balance in favor of the new, threshed, ceramic.

The same predominating hues fills "Instinct," "Salvage" and "Help" and other atmospheric works that represent Delacruz's version of the elements and the elemental making to perfect for the words of creation.

Form "Babel" is not what the title denotes it to be. Rather than a still, it is really the ocean under the flurry of conception, on the verge of filling the earth.

The bioinformed of new creation is here, and it is represented as spirit in the mainframe as responsible to that their look to parents and own demolition.

As expected, in such works as "Kabuto," subtitled "Shogun" "Tora!," "Tsunami," and "Logistics," Delacruz displays his solid draftsmanship and attentions to detail, care could literally feel the vegetation driven in the passing of the wind. The fiber seems rendered in an envelope of spray, like the mist churning from the jungle.

Perhaps the most intriguing of the suite of paintings is Delacruz's rendition of his proverbial dream, whichever his iconography may stand for. Mother Earth, fire, the evil of deluge, overcome and evaporation.

"Sinking" and "Babel" show the sacred feminine barely breaking from the vessels of light, and, with some of the darkest works, the

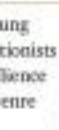
"KALIKALI" I

pattern of colors.

In a way, Delacruz's experimentation with observation and normalcy is predetermined by the themes he has chosen to display. In smoking, in his studies of the divine elements in nature, he plumbs the heart of things, making the unfamiliar familiar in order to show the spirit that pulses behind the material.

It is surprising how so spiritual an art can find meaning in the graphic, ostensibly realistic depiction of objects. But the method is really deceptive, the "Multitudes" of life we label it with.

The artist digs deep into the ecology of the cosmos, coming up finally with liquid evidence of the spray and the spirit that animated the most solid of reality. Of Delacruz's art is ultimately robust as it is delicately spiritual.



ung
tionists show
lience
enre

"MARY Go Round," "In London"

minister fellowship instead of fights. Eileen's a "conspiracy" it's a conspiracy of pals. And, indeed, Bermuda seems delighted to draw "pictures" of her friends—Lindles, Bobby Masters, Jojo Lobanov, Michelle Lim—if not other pictures at them.

It's her fellow's in art with light locomotives and easy company to share the works single-with a certain frivolous, a certain flimsiness. It's what you may call "indigo abstraction." Like it. Subsets

Just can't get enough of Shoppesville

Greenhills Shopping Center

SHOPPESVILLE

Shop & Live!

"SAPA sa Barasoain"

THE ARTIST with his sister Emily Alonzo

"MAMAHIN" engaye

Painter's homecoming show

Johnny Alonzonte, 56, a product of the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts and a resident of Australia for more than 25 years, holds his homecoming show, 'Sacred Spaces,' at Art Space, Glorietta 4, Makati City, until Oct. 26.

923 JOEY
It's a groove thing!

Invite you to the Advance Screening of

OCTOBER 23, 2006 (MONDAY) 7:30PM

POWER PLANT
CINEMA 2

www.923joey.ph

MTRCB RATING: R-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YRS. OLD AND ABOVE.

IN CINEMAS OCTOBER 25 (WEDNESDAY)

Borlongan studies at 1/of

ELMER BORLON gan's studies for the children's book, "The Rocking Horse," a collaboration be tween Borlongan and writer Becky Bravo, are on exhibit at 1/of Gallery, 2/F., Shops at Serendra, Taguig.

The book, co-pub lished by Cinema and the UST Publishing House, is based on a Borlongan painting. For the story, the artist created a suite of paintings that were mapped by col laborator early this year. The studies are now on exhibit and limited print copies of the paintings are on sale.

Visit www.cine ma.ph or e-mail info @cinema.ph

"MEMORIES"

Otoniel Gonzaga in concert

"KARAYE PERSEL," a Christmas concert, will be presented Dec. 14 by the Man agement Associations of the Philippines and the Barkadas de San Antonio Parish at the Ateneo de Manila Grade School in Rockwell Drive, Makati City.

The program will feature world re nowned tenor Otoniel Gonzaga, as well as tenors Fredric Asencio and George Yang, and so prano Rachelle Gonzales, Camille Lopez and Karla Cabarrus.

Call 7511149 or 7511152.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2006
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
LIFESTYLE

RAMON ORLINA
30 years in the embrace of light

RAMON Orlina with model for his exhibit "Strangulus," he LIFT's quadricentennial in 2011

IT HAS BEEN 30 YEARS SINCE Ramon Orlina, leaving his architecture practice in 1974 and turning to the visual arts full time, found splendor in the glass. He flattened rice with pumping but later on transitioned upon sculpture.

It was not really a radical shift since his architecture training at the University of Santo Tomas (UST) and his own practice had made him predisposed to the tactile and architectonic dimensions of sculpture. But as the story went, there were sculptors and sculptors. How could a neophyte carve his own niche in such a crowded galaxy?

Of course, we know what happened. In 1976, Orlina found the light. Used to manipulating space as an architect, he turned to glass sculpture as a way to maneuver light, the progenitor of space.

Aside from his architecture background, the choice of medium owed to his innate artistic sensibilities. After all, the best painting is a play of light and shadows, and glass, with its inherent qualities of reflection and refraction, is a medium that has the best potential to play tricks in the space around it, turning it to a new light.

Of course, Orlina was also breaking new ground. Although glass is an old medium, he did new things with it that catapulted his career on the genre.

While glass is blown into shape when it is hot and malleable, Orlina molds glass like a sculptor would, grinding and shaping it into abstract forms that assume organic integrity through sharp bends and sleek curves. The result is no joke since he manages glass to do drops, making them animate light.

The light is manipulated or trapped in such a way as to provide "volume lighting" to the contours and outlines that are defined by the sculptor's kneading. The result is an illusion, that instrument.

Orlina is one of our most advanced practitioners of recycled art. Since the start, he had formed a partnership with Republic Glass Holdings, with Rudolf Glatzl in those their bravery of economics. of glass droppings on the floor. Known as cullets, the huge blocks of glass come in various shapes and configurations, and it is Orlina's artist's eye and architect's discipline that recognize and create a use for the seemingly raw measurements of light.

It is also an art that is multidimensional, a quality that is again the centerpiece of "light play." The sculptures can be viewed in the front or the back as whatever portion. The light remains whatever

(CONTINUED ON C4)

'Quintessence,' which opens Thursday, sums up the achievements of the Master of Lux

YOUR PROBLEM:
LIMP, THINNING HAIR

SVENSON'S HAIRLOSS Rx:
Ultra-Lush Volumizer Treatment

Does your hair appear wispy and withering? Svenson can turn your hair from limp and thinning to lush and thick with Ultra-Lush Volumizer Treatment. It is specially formulated to revive every strand and produce thicker, stronger-growing hair. A fuller and lush look will be restored – your hair's true "crowning glory"!

You don't have to suffer from hairloss. Take the Svenson solution for your thinning hair and look forward to more lushness and thickness. Call Svenson for a FREE hair and scalp check-up.

WOMEN AT Svenson
Best Non-Invasive Privacy Salon

CALL 892-HAIR (4247)

YOUR LAST CHANCE TO OWN

ALL THIS SPACE

FOR A LOT LESS, RIGHT IN THE HEART OF ALABANG.

The Mondrian Residences is fast nearing completion. You still have a chance to own a stylish condominium unit with an individual terrace, overlooking lavish fishing views – all jam-packing pleasure!

- the Mondrian offers you better value – bigger units, no-hassle maintenance and square metres more typical condominiums
- it is 15 minutes to the Makati Central Hub, Rockwell, Greenhills and Ortigas
- all units security-fitted
- situated and accessible for meeting no-site

THE MONDRIAN RESIDENCES

Call 807-0111, 809-3612, 809-3076

FOXTROT — BY BILL AMEND

A. LIPIN — BY JESS ABREN

BABY BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY — BY PH. JUNIOR

NUTTS — BY PATRICK MCDONNELL

ADVENNOTE — BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

ATOMO AND WEBBY — BY LYN GARCELLANO

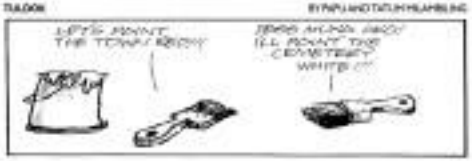
DIVINE COMEDY — BY STEVEN RABLANCA

AVAILABLE NA RIN ANG DIVINE COMEDY COMICS SA NATIONAL BOOKSTORE AT PHILIPPINE CHRISTIAN BOOKSTORE

BIRD MACHINE — BY MAHAR ABREN

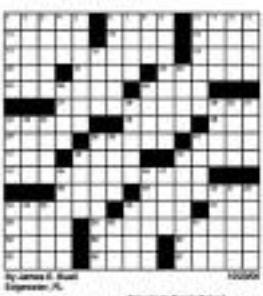
MAMBOBOMBO — BY JOHNO TUJOD

TULOOK — BY PAPI LAND TATUM PALAMBRONG



BEH — BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD



ACROSS
1 Italian talents
9 Mind booster in pills
10 Outer barriers
14 Apothecary's dose
15 Mr. Ed's pal
16 Skywalker's sister
17 Sleep cycles
19 Caught—but not released hair?
20 Tiny firecracker
22 Four tins, only two winners
24 Respiratory
25 Between points
27 Sleep cycles
28 Where the turnout runs
30 Mail-ing
32 Bull of Flores Island
37 Tried
38 Study
39 Top captain of show Queensang
41 Fuss
42 Bridge's preliminary
43 Dog treats, and a hint to 20A's
44 Sleep cycles
49 "... Long Time"
50 Connecticut zone
51 C.S.I. man
52 Ribbet
53 Spanish chaser
54 Bandana scrooge
56 Least famous
57 Self-conscious
58 Polynesian seafarer
59 Impugned
60 Rugby's Ah-no
61 Lacuna
62 Minds (looked attentively)

DOWN
1 Kindness
2 Famous radio talker
3 Hamlet and Alexander
4 Monument
5 You and what army?
6 King in "The Tempest"
7 Northern thorn
8 Lend support
9 Quiet coloured
10 Weekly mode
11 Bandana (partner)
12 On jury and members
13 Pirate's take
18 Item that rises
21 Rugged mercato
23 Wolfgang was thinking big
26 Reading an
28 Anchor's automotive
29 On top of
30 Deficit
31 Cat part
32 Apple PC
33 Woodworking channel
34 Molecule part
35 Flying middle managers
36 Legal filer
40 Dick Whos, lately
42 Bobbin bearer
43 Tight embrace
44 Value limit
46 Luke's Jedi mentor
47 Blemish
48 Very successful
51 Author Lovage
53 Pale ___
55 Gentle breeze
56 "Rock stars!"
58 Justice Rembrandt
59 THE letter in jeans
60 Tax deed
61 Rock producer Brian

HOROSCOPE

THIS WEEK TODAY: You have enormous energy. (Has no so much?) You're productive, imaginative, and passionate. You've got powerful to-do lists a mile from the bank, play on a team, become involved with charitable campaigns, you want work with groups. You have adventure and challenges in your future. Don't miss out on opportunities, perhaps one to be taken of 1987.

BORNS: All This Rightful people legend: Aimee Dance, TV host; Natalie Locke, actress/author.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Your ability to do research is of extreme excellent to you in the coming days. Make you want to know about or discover, you will succeed in finding it. (Hard look under every rock.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Take a look at your relationships. Are they balanced? People are motivated to be enthused of each other today. (Has only you noticed a chosen feeling?)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Your spirit of friendship are very valued today. You'll be asked to handle any of the duties requires attention to detail. You also have long periods of concentration today.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Any artistic projects or arts-and-crafts you've been working on will today. You have a creative mind and a willing ness to pay attention to hands. Be mindful of concentration and attention to detail.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): This is a good day to make decisions. Think around. Be honest in make decisions. Be passionate, but don't be too negative. Be tolerant of and understand of others.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Be on the lookout for opportunities today. Be open to new ideas and willing to take risks. Be willing to try something new. Be open to this is a good day to sign contracts and land new job leads and/or anything. You won't miss a thing!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You're full of creative and financial opportunities today. You have a lot of energy and you're more willing to do what you want to do. Be open to any disciplined style now. Take care that you don't rush or become overly negative in your words.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You have to be on your toes today. Avoid heated discussions. Be careful not to become negative when reacts from others, especially if they question your ideas. Don't allow yourself! (They're not true!)

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Work alone today. You're in a creative mood. Don't become negative when reacts from others, especially if they question your ideas. Don't allow yourself! (They're not true!)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Someone close might alter you emotional affairs today. Be open to this. Some other hand, if someone acts or behaves rude, it doesn't mean he or she knows everything.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Many people are on your mind today. You might have to be question to someone else. This is a good day to study any kind of little subject or pursue a hobby. Be open to religious, political and history, you'll be able to accomplish a lot. You have strong mental energy today.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Pisces have to study any kind of little subject or pursue a hobby. Be open to religious, political and history, you'll be able to accomplish a lot. You have strong mental energy today.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku — by Dave Green

			2		4			
	4	2	5		6	3	1	
	6	5				4	9	
4	3			7			6	9
			3		8			
1	5			4			3	8
	7	1				9	8	
	2	4	8		5	1	7	
			9		7			

Difficulty Level ★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

6	2	9	1	5	8	7	4	3
3	4	7	9	2	3	2	6	8
1	3	8	4	6	7	5	9	2
8	9	3	2	1	4	9	6	7
2	7	4	6	9	3	8	1	5
5	6	1	7	8	5	3	2	4
4	8	2	5	4	6	1	7	9
7	9	6	8	2	1	4	5	3
9	1	6	3	7	9	2	3	6

30 years in the embrace of light

"SAPPHIRE Ring"

From page B1

part the "corner chooses to see seems spot-lit.

Ortina also relieves the pure abstraction by figurative riches while leaving most of the parts polished, smooth and seemingly invisible. The **resistive quality marks the** obsessive bending and carving that have **raised the work into an el**ess of grace and impressionability.

But the fact that Ortina is an architect and a craftsman and he has an army of artisans and workers (who translate into a basketball team **and showing signal during the** summer league in San Juan, Manila, believe me) **should remind the audi**ence that a thing of beauty is also a thing of hard industry and dedicated artistry.

"Diamond Guy"

"RISING Amber"

Glass master

Because he has made his unique brand of glass sculpture his own, Ortina is perhaps one of the best-known Filipino artists abroad. (In "glass master" if there was one, he has been conferred by prestigious galleries in the West and across continents abroad.

"Quintessence," the title of his forthcoming anniversary show at the Ayala Museum, is originally the title of his glass window installation that is the centerpiece of the Singapore Art Museum. At the dark of the millennium, he won the "Mr. Flow" in the 1999 Swarovski International Sculpture Biennale in Innsbruck, and the following year, the first prize in the sculpture category of the Bienniale of basketball in the Fine Arts in Madrid.

For his anniversary show, Ortina promises more of the same and more. The exquisite gossamer shapes remain, but the artist appears more venturesome in colors.

"Samuel's Silhouette" is bronze, and in a number of mixed pieces—"Sapphire King," "Rising Amber" and "Diamond Sky"—Swarovski crystals in liquid colors are sculpted in pleasing and **unique forms. Other works combine** glass and steel.

The exhibit will also present studies and the model for Ortina's most **ambitious com**mission of late, "Integritas," an 8.6-meter sculpture in bronze and glass that will **soon** rise at Ortina's alma mater, in the run-up to 2011, when UST marks its 400th year as Asia's oldest university.

The commission reflects Ortina's ardent love as much as it does UST's. Ortina has gone global with his experiments and accomplishments in light, and whatever the **legacy of history, for light, like the air, en**dures.

"Quintessence," which marks Ramon Ortina's 30 years in sculpture, opens Oct. 25, 6 p.m., at the Glass Wing of the Ayala Museum, Makati.

2006 Toyota Classics in Manila

TOYOTA MOTOR PHILIPPINES CORP. is staging the 2006 Toyota Classics at Cultural Center of the Philippines Oct. 24.

This year, the Toyota Classics will feature the world-renowned Bayreu Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Tetsuya Hamano, with Japanese flutist **Ayako Takagi and Filipino pianist Jovian**ne Hermosisima-Ortiz. Ticket proceeds of this year's concert will go to the National Centre for Transportation Studies of the University of the Philippines. This is the Toyota Classics' way of celebrating the 50th anniversary of Philippine-Japan diplomatic relations.

Takagi is among Japan's most sought-after young flutists, thanks to an attractive combination of technique and style **that has won her an enthusiastic follow**ing. Her numerous awards include grand prizes at the 57th Japan Music Competition (2000) and the 70th Japan Music Competition (2001), as well as the Nippon Steel Music Award (2001).

Other awards she received include the Mainichi Shimbun All-Japan Student Music Competition of Tokyo (1st prize, 1995), the Japan Flute Convention Competition (1st prize and audience award, 1995), the Ishii International Flute Competition (3rd prize, 2001) and the **Jean-Pierre Rampal International Flute** Competition.

Ortiz is the most internationally **awarded Filipino concert pianist. He was** a prizewinner in the Jose Iturbi (Valencia), the Pilar Bayona (Zaragoza), the Maria Canals (Barcelona) and the Jaen International Piano Competition in Spain; the Peabody Conservatory International Piano Competition in New York; the Rina Sala Gallo International Piano **Competition in Milan; and the Interna**tional Competition for Piano and Orchestra in Italy.

He also won first prize in the Bergen Philharmonic Solo Competition, the Hadsbuddal Symphony Solo Competition, the Queens Symphony Soloist Competition, the New York State Music Teachers Association and the Fort Towson Great North and Fort Washington Piano Competitions.

Japanese comic play at PCIBank Tower

"Yuji and Kiss" is a stage adaptation of a comic book written by Kazuhiki Shirogari.

TO CELEBRATE PHILIPPINE-JAPAN Friendship Year, the Japan Foundation Manila, in cooperation with the MCO Foundation and Equitable PCIBank, presents "Yuji and Kiss," a stage adaptation of a comic book titled "Mr. Yuji and Mr. Kiss in Deep," written by Kazuhiki Shirogari.

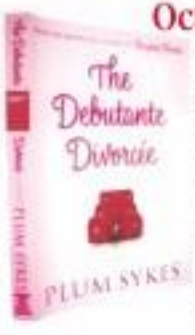
The work is taken from one of the most important genres of Japanese classic literature, "Tobai Dodo (Handicap)," which was written by Jippensha Ikku approximately 200 years ago (in the late 18th era).

The main characters, Yuji and Kiss, leave Edo to earn his lifetime, hoping to find something real to done world. When it begins to rain, they stop at a small inn. As the persistent rain lasts for days, neither ideas start to fill their minds and they weave between fantasy and reality. As time and space are compressed in their heroes, Yuji and Rika become **unsure of whether they're** lead Jack Edo or not, and their sightseeing unfold with humor and absurdity.

"Yuji and Kiss" is written and directed by Yuuji Amano and produced by the Kudan Project. It will have performances at the Onna Chan Chaya on 25, September (8:30pm), Theatre 1, Makati Avenue cor. 119 Avia Center Hotel, Makati City, Oct. 27-28 at 7:30 p.m., and Oct. 29 at 3 p.m. Admission is free.

Group reservations will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. Call 811-1555-56.

October book club reads



THE POWER BOOK CLUB TACKLES two novels from both ends of the literary spectrum this October. Best-selling author Plum Sykes' "The Debutante Divorcée," and award-winning author Haruki Murakami's "Blind Willow, Sleeping Woman."

Sykes hit it big in 2004 with "Bergdorf Blondes," a novel that introduced readers to the glamorous world of the Manhattan Princesses. Sykes is bringing the fabulous girls back with "The Debutante Divorcée," a novel that promises to be every bit as beloved as her smash debut.

Following the best selling triumph of "Kafka on the Shore" comes a collection that gives readers expression Murakami's mastery.

In "Blind Willow Sleeping Woman," Murakami presents 25 short stories that go from the surreal to the mundane.

The Power Book Club will discuss "The Debutante Divorcée" Oct. 24, 6:30 p.m., at Power Books Greenbelt, and "Blind Willow Sleeping Woman" Oct. 25, 6:30 p.m., at PowerBooks Megamall.

The Power Book Club is open to everyone. Simply register at the Customer Service counter of any PowerBooks branch and get 10 percent off the featured book. Members of the Power Plus holders also get 10 percent off Plus, the first 30 registrants get a free cup of coffee from the

store. Also, PowerBooks has branches at Greenhills A (757-9428-29), Megamall (635-2898-99), Alabang Town Center (850-9042-60), Glorietta 2 (752-0585), Shangri-La (633-0041), Robinson's Place Ermita (523-3334), and Rockwell Asia (840-2441).

New book of humor essays

MILFLORES PUBLISHING Inc. has released "The King of Nothing to Do: Essays on Nothing and Everything" by Luis Joaquin M. Katigbak.

The first collection of essays is comprised of short, but pared pieces that are suffused throughout with Katigbak's droll, ironic mid, at times, hilarious humor that will often take the reader by surprise. There are also gems of profound and lucid insights that the author shares, in irony, happened despite his best efforts.

The book's title comes from Katigbak's current column in the Manila Bulletin's creation, which he describes as "a pleasant ongoing conversation about such things as writing books, music, films and pop culture—except I do all the talking." If, indeed, this book is a conversation with the reading, then it is an unfailingly pleasant and entertaining one with a brilliant young mind who is one of the best writers of his generation.

Katigbak has won Palanca and Philippine Graphic awards for his short fiction. His collection of short stories, "Happy Endings," was nominated for a Manila Critics Circle National Book Award.

The cover design and illustrations of the book are done brilliant Oh graphic book design mix by Ricardo N. Bhadra.

"The King of Nothing to Do" is available at all National Book Stores, PowerBooks, Books for Less and other major bookstores at P450 per copy.

Call 7234451 or e-mail milflores@pacific.net.ph.

Second children's reading fair

THIS OCTOBER, NATIONAL BOOK STORE is celebrating Children's Reading Month by offering up to 30 percent discounts on selected Children's, Young Adult and Parenting titles in all branches nationwide. Promo runs Oct. 1-31.

Every P500 purchase of any Children's, Young Adult and/or Parenting book will entitle the customer to one entry pass to the 2nd NBS Children's Reading Fair, which will be held Oct. 28-29 at the Megatrade Conference Center, Pasong Tamo. Bazaar A & B, UP Building in Diliman.

This is a weekend devoted to children and parents, where they can participate in different activities, listen to storytelling sessions and attend parenting seminars for free.

Come to your local bookstore for a chance to win a special prize!

Habitat for Humanity Philippines

The journey continues

Habitat for Humanity Philippines aims to build 50,000 more homes in the next five years

By Marlen D. Salazar

Proving the road to more initiatives in helping the underprivileged and homeless Filipinos, Habitat for Humanity Philippines (HFHP) is gearing up to building more homes and rebuilding more lives.

Joining its sister organizations in over 100 countries around the world, HFHP has always adhered to providing "decent, durable, efficient, and affordable" homes.

Gilbert Sagu, president and CEO of HFHP, said: "We want to jumpstart our capacity to eventually building 10,000 homes a year." Within 10 years, that should be 50,000 more homes adding to the 15,000 built so far.

"It's not much considering that millions of Filipinos still need decent homes," he said. "We just have to do what we can and we're hoping more people and organizations will be brought to more doing."

HFHP has undergone a strategic transformation in the past two years. With the shift to shelter being one of the housing projects, is expanded its alliances with other organizations of similar objectives and enhanced housing technologies to speed up and cut down on costs of building homes.

As a nonprofit, nondenominational Christian housing ministry, HFHP does not limit its mission to helping only born-again Christians, but to all others. "Here our conviction is to practice Christ's selfless sharing. The compassion is directed to many."

Sustainability

"We're not just a housing organization," said Dylan Campos, a member of the National Board of Trustees.

His prospective homeowners are selected based on three need criteria and the ability to pay the loan. But the most important thing they look for is the willingness to partner with Habitat, said Campos.

Recipients can avail their ownership of their home between three and five years. The loan is for 15 to 25 year terms, and they actually help build it in the form of sweat equity which ranges anywhere from 400 to 600 hours.

"You shouldn't see it as the house is to be raised by the homeowners, the other ones should contribute to," said Campos. "It's a way to build a cohesive and secure functional community," said Sagu.

The amortization paid by homeowners is then used to build another home. This process is everything Habitat called the Fund for Humanity.

"We do really have good financial stewardship for our funds," he said. To ensure this, the Positive Humanity is deposited in a trustee bank, and the whole organization undergoes an external annual audit.

The capability of the homeowner's repay is determined by a family education committee composed of Habitat affiliates, community organizations and volunteers. Include a representative of the collateral organization that has partnered with Habitat to build homes.

Technology innovations

Sagu believes that what distinguishes HFHP from other organizations is its continuous pursuit for better ways to build more homes and shortening more families in the process.

"We can't sit on our capacity because we have to stay on the appropriate technology," he said.

HFHP uses alternative construction materials and methods. The use of concrete hollow blocks (CHB) and interlocking compressed earth blocks (CEB) actually uses a lot more time and money.

The other method is the use of steel frames, a model now in use in Iloilo from New Zealand.

But the challenge does not mean the quality of the homes is compromised. These materials and construction process is for durable and more importantly easier to handle, saving volunteers valuable time and help in the construction.

The houses

Different locations have different needs. HFHP is transforming these nationwide. It has helped build houses for the urban poor on the basis of their needs.

From the most common single detached houses, HFHP also built duplex-type homes in Tacloban.

The Habitat for Humanity Philippines helped relieve the 417 families living the cultural trauma of Mindanao in Nasat by helping build rondavel-type houses together with the Mindanao Development Foundation, which is also providing a grant to the homeowners' cooperative through the Asian Development Bank. The Japanese Association of Business also saw the fire of more than 1,000 families in Tondo, Manila and helped build more than 200 permanent houses.

Recently, Habitat served as facilitator for Habitat with a grant from the European Commission to help rebuild houses destroyed by the tsunami in the urban areas. This has led to a new MBL project, the one proposed by Mayor Freddie Tinga of Sagay, called the Family Town Homes, which will also be the Fund for Humanity's first permanent component. It will have homes on initial batch of 100 families.

Partnerships

HFHP is continually forming alliances with different organizations, including multi-lateral institutions, and private corporations to expedite its projects.

It is currently focusing on seven disaster projects.

About 100 families will benefit from the housing project by HFHP and St. Benedict Intercontinental Corporation in Tacloban. The families who lost their lives living in hanging shanties or in survive in Mabolo, Pasay City will receive relocate of their own. The lot for the site was sold by the Bank of the Philippine Islands at a discounted price.

Gawad sa Caritas Member Bonds ng Pinoy will help build 50 houses.

HFHP is also one of the many organizations that responded to calamity that hospital Southern Leyte in February. HFHP partner with GMA Kapuso Foundation to build 100 permanent single detached houses in Liloan town. The Philippine National Red Cross and the Department of Social Welfare and Development also helped. HFHP extended a second 200 houses in Brgy. Bangkerohan, Bay, Laguna, and Pulupandan in Negros Occidental following the fire that destroyed 1,000 families in former conflict areas of Muslim Mindanao, as well as local various communities development projects.

Values education

Sagu said projects both solve the socio-economic problems HFHP's commitment is not limited to providing homes. "We're here to help build communities."

Aside from houses and school buildings, HFHP also build community centers with funding from the Angelo King Foundation. This center serves as venue not only for socializing with neighbors, but for values and livelihood training, and medical programs.

Education seems to be a primary concern for HFHP.

"What do we do for the education?" asked Sagu. "Because we maintain close surroundings, there must be clean water, septic tanks, and more importantly we want our children to cultivate the culture of savings."

Sagu is optimistic in reaching their target within the next five years. "We have the technology, the logistics, the financial backing, the commitment from the volunteers and the support from the government," he said.

"We like everybody to help," said Sagu. "We want to thank those who never stopped to help the poor."

Habitat for Humanity Philippines 'homepartners' build their homes, then help other families build their own

"House for a House" Principle Guarantees This Program for the Poor Will Be for the Long Term

Habitat homepartners pay back for their house in terms within their work. These are **simple, efficient, durable, affordable homes for the poor.**

Appropriate technology, comfortable and stable design, homepartners' sweat equity and volunteers' work, local materials either donated or generously discounted, and project managed construction. A income bank uses to it that all payments go to the building of new homes.

Because of these innovations, **Habitat for Humanity Philippines is now the second-biggest country builder among Habitat countries outside the United States.**

Habitat doesn't only build communities. We build lives.

Habitat is an international Christian housing ministry. Homepartners are empowered to pay for their own homes through values formation, including a culture of serving, and access to livelihood.

They also get access to education, health and nutrition facilities in a safe and wholesome community as a result of Habitat's alliances with organizations that share its values or helping the poor achieve dignity and self-respect. As many as 1,000 volunteers from various countries also come here every year, contributing at least $250 per head to build homes for the poor.

With its focus on technology, project management and wide alliances, HFHP's goal is to increase its capacity to 10,000 homes a year and a total of 50,000 houses built within the next five years.

October being National Shelter Month, Habitat for Humanity Philippines is building a relocation site for informal settlers in Puno City, a project of the St. Hannibal Gregorianum Center, the Family Town Homes project of Bhavis Freddie Tinga of Sagay in the Food Terminal compound, with the support of the Rotary Club of Manila for the pilot phase, disaster response homes and schools in mudslide-affected barangays in Southern Leyte in partnership with the Philippine National Red Cross, GMA Kapuso Foundation, Petron, Department of Social Welfare and Development, and Semirodriguez Electronic Industries in the Philippines, Inc. (SEIPI) and "Build for Peace," a project funded by the European Commission for former combatants and displaced families in post-conflict areas in Mindoro, Mindanao as well as homes for teachers, policemen, government workers and other low-income sectors.

HFHP is also bringing education closer to communities by building schools in partnership with the GMA Kapuso Foundation, and providing venues for community-building activities through multipurpose centers in partnership with the Angelo King Foundation.

Join us in building Habitat homes and building lives. HFHP may be contacted through tel. no. 897-8000 or through info@hfhp.org.ph. Visit our website at www.habitat.org.ph.

Habitat builds more homes in National Shelter Month

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY PHILIPPINES has stepped up its housing projects in various regions to help mark October as National Shelter Month under a presidential executive order. Habitat builds "simple, efficient, durable and affordable homes for the poor" in a worldwide program that requires financial sustainability and volunteerism.

One of three housing projects in the second phase of the Sr. Sacrabal Project which is a relocation site in Mabilog, Pasay City for informal settlers living in dangerous areas of the city, 4,624.2 square meters for was told by its owner, Bank of the Philippine Islands, at a deep discount to the Social Housing Finance Program, which will sell it to the homeowners under the community mortgage program. The project's proponent is St. Sacrabal Empowerment Center (SSEC), an NGO founded by the Franciscans of the Heart of Jesus, with Habitat handling the house-building component. This phase will build 346 homes for a total cost of P25 million.

A second project consists of 300 homes to medium-rise dome housing units to be built at the compound of Food Terminal Inc. (FTI), in Taguig City, for the informal settlers living there. The main proponent is the city government with donations from, among others, the Henry Ong of Manila, which raised one million pesos for this project to mark its centennial.

A third project actually are three con-

VICE President Noli de Castro with Fr. Donnie Pradenciano, Executive Director of the Fr. Hurnibal Empowerment Center during the awarding of "Certificates of Participation" to the home partner families.

struction sites in barangays affected by the mudslides in Southern Leyte, consisting of eight classrooms and 200 houses in Liloan town, with 6,000 Kapuso Foundation as main proponent; 320 houses in Bgy. Maghatpag in St. Bernard, Philippine National Red Cross as proponent, and another 300 homes in the same barangay. Dept. of Social Welfare and Development; and one schoolbuilding in San Francisco town, Bantay as proponent.

Another major project is HFHP's "Build for Peace" program, which will include houses, schools, water and power installations and sanitation facilities in 15 municipalities in Cotabato, South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani and General Santos City. Houses are being built for more than 1,000 former combatants and displaced families in the Mindanao conflict. The funds come from a grant of one million euros to HFHP from the European Commission.

Habitat for Humanity Philippines began its operations in 1986 and has so far built some 13,000 houses in more than 130 communities in 19 provinces and 29 cities. Together with the U.S. and Guatemala, it is among the top three country builders under Habitat for Humanity International which was founded in 1976 by Millard Fuller and his wife, Linda, in Georgia, USA. An international Christian housing ministry, Habitat operates in over 100 countries and is now building its next 200,000 homes.

Habitat projects are made sustainable by its "a house for a house" operating principle where "homepartners" are willing to pay an affordable amortization that goes to a trust fund which will give another family the chance to build its own home.

In this way, HFHP builds communities through alliances to equal partnerships. The homepartners are also provided with a support system that includes community organizing and values formation including a culture of savings, access to livelihood, education, health, safety and environment.

The houses are built with the use of appropriate technology from materials donated or sold at a groceries discount by sponsors, and supported by local and foreign funders, and the labor from the homepartners' "sweat equity" and volunteer workers.

To date, HFHP has built 15,000 homes and is targeting a total of 30,000 houses in the next five years.

European Union awards €1-M grant for new Peace Build

THE EUROPEAN UNION (EU) HAS awarded a grant of 1 million euros to Habitat for Humanity Philippines for its Build for Peace project. This will cover various peace and development communities (PDCs), which are communities of ex-combatants of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) as well as Christian sympathizers, in eighteen local government units in the provinces of Cotabato, South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani, and General Santos City.

The project's components include using the new and build and building-in-stages approaches, build decent, durable, and affordable shelter for 1,000 ex-combatants and internally displaced people. HFH Philippines will design, implement and develop livelihood projects in each PDC, including the establishment of savings-credit facilities mechanisms. The project will also improve access to water, environmental sanitation facilities and such services as health and electricity, as well as strengthen existing structures for peace and development, and institutionalize partnerships from the community up to the provincial levels, including the mainstreaming of PDC plans in the municipal and provincial development plans.

This is the third "Peace Build" of HFHP. The first Peace Build was in the village of Ngangan in Sirawai, Zamboanga, and was implemented by the Mindanao affiliate. Land for the site was donated by an ex-MNLF commander, who envisioned a community for both Muslim and Christians. Fifty-eight houses were constructed by the end of 2001.

Another Peace Build was held in Barangay Bunao, Tayi, South Cotabato. Ex-MNLF combatants had formed a cooperative which mobilized their savings to purchase a three-hectare parcel of land for housing. The Greater Soreta City Habitat affiliate worked with UNDP/EU to help the cooperative build the houses. Using the Save and Build approach, eighteen houses were constructed beginning in July 2004. The other beneficiaries of the lands for houses construction came from the Presidential Social Fund, two petroleum companies, and from the repayments of the affiliate's earlier homepartners.

As with other Peace Builds, it is hoped that the Build for Peace project will result not just in decent, durable, and affordable houses and in decent communities where the former victims of the armed conflict can share in the fruits of development but also in helping build a just and lasting peace in Mindanao.

A CHB house in a 'Build for Peace' site in Mindanao.

MAESTRO Orobia and mom

Orobias at Heart Center

Nilandro Orobia watches some—Mac, Marlon and Joan—are having a family exhibit. "Orobia," at the Heart Gallery of the Philippine Heart Center, until Nov. 4. Although the exhibit opened last Oct. 19, the formal opening will be on Oct. 28. Orobia is a leading proponent and painter with collectors from around the world. His concerns underlined themselves as a thought-provoking in 1994, especially after, while a talking up his Master of Fine Art at the UST Graduate School. The Orobias emulate well-known for hosting art lessons for children and adults and for supporting the religious and community projects of the Sisters of Mary Mediatrix of Grace Congregation and the Holy Spirit Love on Pig (or Nino Manila Missionaries. Call (63-2) 926-3166/64 or e-mail orobiahaus@yahoo.com.

VISUAL ARTS

"HATTE Mother and Child," by Huseen Orobia

Garibay in Davao

Award-winning artist Manny Garibay is holding a homecoming solo mini-show at Ilonggo Gallery in Davao City until Oct. 31. "Kinabuhi" showcases life's interconnections through paintings in acrylic without with the artist's salesmanship in drawing, absolute control of value and composition. Garibay's most recent works portray life's sensibilities and varying fantasies, both done and wild, as well as stories and grand pieces executed in woodcuts, which remains the daily grind of life. Gerbosa Gallery, Ilustre Gen. Luna St., Davao City. Call (082) 2063 864 or log on to www.garibaygallery.com.

'Himala' at Retrato

Retrato of the Filipino Heritage Library features a two-part exhibit on two seemingly contradictory Philippine belief systems. The Above features Philippine rural mythology's gallery of rogues in "Katutubo Idea," a photo exhibit depicting characters in Bicolano folk-creatures. Upstairs room on pastor. The exhibit runs until Oct. 28. The Hispanic era section presents "Himala ng mga Santo," featuring three women: the Virgin of Lucban, Mother Ignacia del Espiritu Santo, R.V.M., and St. Mary Christine Tan, R.G.S. Call (632) 687-1600 or 892-1870.

"BAHAY ni Dranga," by Melvin Culaba

Culaba et al at West

Melvin Culaba, Dondo Mallorca Gonzales and Juanito Torres present "Kalaku-ng Mass," Nov. 3-9 (Nov. 11, at West Gallery, Maria Bonmar, BC, Dagupan City, Adrian Tuguilo, the exhibit showcases the way the three artists see the different social mechanisms around them at play. From Culaba's view of grassroots to Bautista to Torres' take on religiosity and Gonzales' transformation of vastly different images into visual narratives. Call 63 (0)9399731 or 3131184.

AARON Bautista

Bautista at Philaville

Aaron Bautista, an Angono-based visual artist, recently has opened his one-man show, "Concrete Perception," today until Nov. 5 at the Philaville Center, Ortigas Avenue, Cainta, Manila. The exhibit features abstract paintings in mixed media. Call 6321-4575/470 or 0916-2302941.

Impy Pilapil at Alliance Française

Sculptor and serigrapher Impy Pilapil presents "Oriental Feudalism," Oct. 23-Nov. 23, at the Alliance Française Fotal Gallery, 1551 Rizalino Garcia St., Bel-Air II, Makati. The artist has prepared a joyful installation on how the senses (in the widest way) has touched her life and her art to elicit joy as well as peace. Elegantly conceived and meticulously executed, to both one assemblage of glass and acrylic, each piece juxtaposes textures and glowing contrasts that flow into vibrant accords. Tel 756-1555 to 1441.

"OCEANIC Exuberance," by Impy Pilapil

"HARVEST Scene," by Mike Herrera

Herrera at Eastwood

The Art Discovery and Learning Foundation Inc. and Eastwood City present Mike Herrera's one-man exhibit featuring landscapes, cityscapes, still lifes and human interest, until Oct. 31 at the Cinema Lobby, 4F, Citywalk 2, Eastwood City, Libis. QC. Call 6357396 or 3192222.

'Zero-in 2006' at various museums

"Tracy Logic: Art and Science," opens Oct. 25 at the Lopez Museum. It is the museum's contribution to "Zero-in 6," a collaborative project of Artes de Galleri, Ayala Museum, Bohol Treasures Island Memorial Museum and Museo Pambata. Call 8261941.

"FIGURE Against Blue," by Benedicto Cabrera

"Rock Emotions" is currently on view at SM Megamall. Call Galaxy Mike at 6807363.

It's easy to see why diet books seldom make it to the Singapore bestseller list.

Singapore

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Bonnie G. Velarde

Robin rules

By Nini Valera

IF THE ROMANTIC-comedy "Till I Met You" constitutes to make cash registers ring, male lead Robin Padilla offers a pretty reasonable assurance.

"All our Muslim brothers (of their homes were if it's Ramadan to watch the movie," he says. "They also did their part to ensure its success."

Traditionally, Muslims come in full force to watch fireworks that he narrates. It's no surprise they would do the same to the movies of Robin, who has cemented in to him.

But word is the chemistry between Robin and Regine as well.

Make that an end-of-screen.

The stars kept joking and flirting with each other on Monday during the movie's victory party, but Robin about his feelings for Regine and he will say he wants to marry her even if she has continued to bring in a relationship with another man.

"Lito (Robin's wife) is here, and she would be the one to ask Regine if she'd be my wife," says Robin.

Regine continues to brush off Robin's verbal advances, but admits that she's flattered to be pursued by two men.

"Gusto ko ring pinagpapawisan ako (I like it when men fight over me)," she says, jokingly.

Earlier, Regine told reporters for entertainment that she felt Robin's marriage prospect was serious. "I have a dark cross about these things. I feel that he was not joking."

Robin has been married three times, two ending in divorce. Unlike Muslim laws, Robin is allowed four wives as long as he could afford to keep them.

But Robin and Regine would be parting ways to move on to other projects. According to the grapevine, Regine is shooting a movie with Ago Medrach under

ROBIN Padilla and Regine Velasquez (Hot couple on and off screen)

He wins the movie crowd and, hopefully, Regine's heart

another film outfit. Joints would start taping the hit series drama series for GMA 7, which would pair him with Angel Locsin.

Meanwhile, the Robin-Regine starrer grossed P40 million during its first six-day run.

A co-production between GMA Films and Viva Films, the movie opened last Oct. 11 in 150 theaters nationwide, with a first day take of P1.4 million.

The figures were supplied by Orbit Films' president Antonio Aligaga last week, based on sales reports culled by Viva Films' booking office.

Aligaga told boy.com.ph separately that the aspects in his more than P500 million before the

BOOKS 11

Recent performances evaluated

OF LATE, A HUMBER OF PER-formances on TV and in the movies have caught our attention, because they illustrate either positive or negative elements that affect the craft and art of acting.

We've already complimented

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Regine Velasquez for her gutsy performance in her current starrer, "Till I Met You." Today, however, we would like to point out a negative aspect to her portrayal that she would think about and rectify, if she wants to come up with even better performances in the future.

That negative element is the self-awareness very that Regine uses her mouth in performance. If she hitches to study a tape of her scenes in her latest vehicle, she will see that she keeps moving her lips to different ways—to look cute, to indicate what she's thinking, to react to what her co-actor is saying or doing, etc.

This is a nervous, self-conscious mannerism that is frowned upon in the acting trade, because it betrays the actor inducing rather than being.

In other words, the performer is letting on his or her attitude about the scene at hand, when what viewers really need to see is the character behaving in a natural manner on the screen.

Through "indicating" mannerisms like Regine's "lip emotion," the performer is visually commenting on the scene, and that is a no-no because the actor isn't the important element in acting; it's the character he or she is playing.

The moment Regine realizes this and does something about it honestly, unconscious on the show actor she's playing, not on herself), the faster she'll develop into a truly competent actress.

On the other hand, in "Wet Any Night," stars lead Kim Chiu's problem is even more basic. She has a hard time concentrating her lines.

She's too raw and unrefined a performer to realize that acting is communication, an exchange of ideas and emotions to a prime impetus.

In a number of scenes, we witness as we listen to Kim struggling to make herself understood, and failing much of the time.

This is another example of a young talent being thrust in front of the movie camera before she's ready to do really professional work.

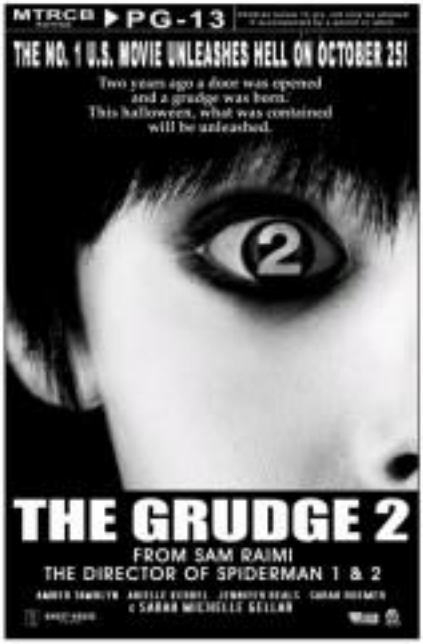
To be fair to herself and her future career prospects, Kim should take time off to work on her communication problem before she acts again on TV or in the movies. With the help of a good director coach, she should be able to lick her problem in no time at all. And, lick it, she must.

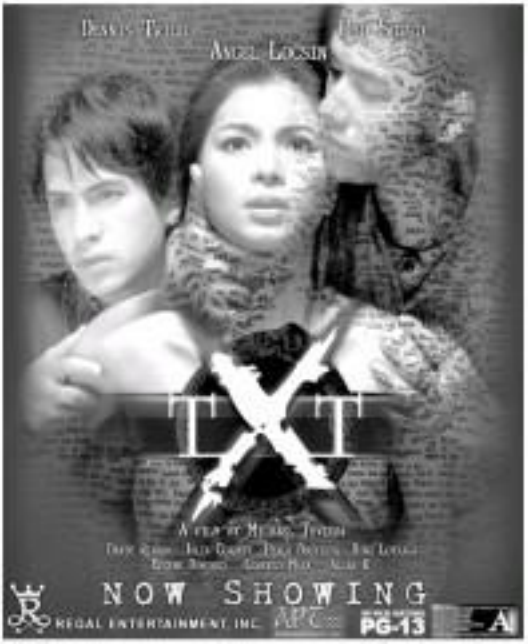
On the other hand, an excellent performance has been turned in by Cherry Pie Picache in the forthcoming movie, "Kubrador."

Ironically, the film was completed many months ago, but is being shown only on Nov. 1. So, Cherry Pie has to wait until next year before she can reap the nominations and perhaps even awards that her unique performance should engender.

What makes her portrayal in "Kubrador" unique is the fact that the actress plays a lesbian without out all of the tough-gal clichés that have long been attached to that kind of character through the years.

Instead, Cherry Pie opts to play the lesbian/daughter of the dotal





New 'Korean Invasion' to hit Manila

SEOUL KOREAN "DANCE DIVA," 11 coming to Manila for two nights of dazzling performances.

The sexy modern-music dropsy, who popularized the hit song "Shower the Planet," will be joined by pop balladeer Christian Bautista.

Miss will be doing two shows at the Araneta Coliseum on Oct. 24 & 25 p.m. and at the Cinek 9 p.m.

SHOW TIME

Popstrospect

Pops Fernandez and musical guests will perform and reminisce on hits in "Popstrospect" at the Cultural Villanueva Theatre's Shopping Mall on Oct. 24 at

Joining her is former Sunday Manuel who includes Jeffrey Hidalgo.

Call (632) 412-1300 loc. 202 or (632) 501-7601.

Tonight

Orange and Lemons will blast Dance and Oldies of Today at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3.

Backstreety at "The Shore, Ayala, QC.

Robin rules

B-4 [Page B1]

movie ends its run in four to five weeks.

She attributes the movie's success to the fact that it was the only local film that opened on Christmas the other week.

"I'm happy that other local films were not against us," she says. "I think this proves that producers should help each other. If we are pitting movies against each other, the movie would always suffer. There are 52 weeks in a year. So why not pick a week when no other local movie would be showing?"

Mitch says her movie is celebrating "Dr. I Mic Fest" received a B rating from the Cinema Evaluation Board, which entitles the producers to a 40-percent tax rebate.

"With this rebate, we would be breaking even with our P60 million," Mitch says, noting that the movie cost P50 million to produce.

The Film Censorship Board is scheduled to meet by the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board has also helped fill up movie houses during the weekend, traditional family days, she adds.

She also observes that the second runnup of Sobio and Regine, both in their late 30s, showed that mature stars have still a lot of mileage left in them, running counter to the prevalent trend of teen movies.

Recent...

B-4 [Page B1]

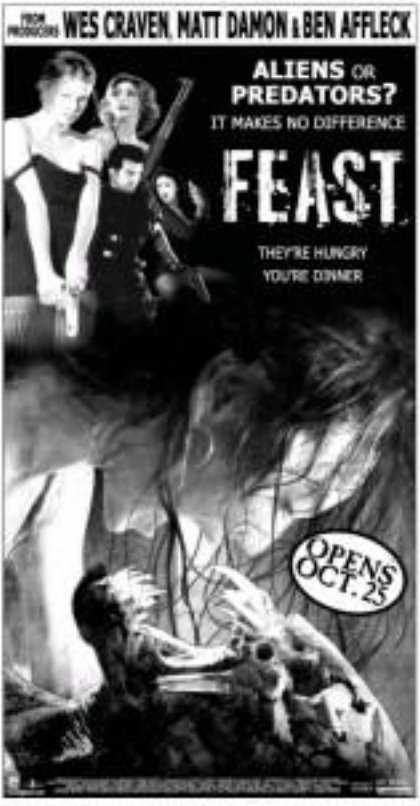
ending character portrayed by Johnny Delgado in a feature being who's much more than just a gym-for-brains.

As a result, her character is richly three-dimensional, and compellingly conflicted in more than half one way or the other but a lot in small ones and in, to understand so Cheri's life is crossing her.

Young actor should make it a point to catch "Kaleidoscope" as they can learn from Cherry Pie's performance in it.

It can teach them a lot about going beyond character type, "studying" a character from different perspectives, "being" instead of "acting," and making people who may initially be difficult to root for—perhaps even—

In his own way, Johnny Delgado also teaches these lessons in his complete portrayal of the "dad" and demanding father in the movie. Two compelling performances in one movie! That's a big bonus.



ROUNDUP

'Open Season' voice cast

COLUMBIA PICTURES ASSEMBLES A bunch of A-list actors to breathe life to a cast of colorful characters in the new animated adventure comedy "Open Season."

Leading their distinctive voices to the film are Martin Lawrence, Ashton Kutcher, Gary Sinise and Debra Messing.

The film is the story of Boog, a domesticated grizzly bear with no survival skills whose perfect world is turned upside down when he meets Elliot, a streetsy, fast-talking mule deer.

"We reviewed many different voices," says co-director Jill Culton. "And finally, when we paired Martin Lawrence and Ashton Kutcher, lightning struck. Martin brought this terrific smooth swagger and confidence to Boog and Ashton's playful, manic energy was perfect for Elliot."

The film opens on Oct. 25.

Torn between two magicians

Scarlett Johansson finds herself torn between actors Hugh Jackman and Christian Bale in Warner Bros' new thriller "The Prestige."

Directed by Christopher Nolan, the movie revolves around the intense rivalry of two magicians, leading them on a lifelong battle for supremacy full of obsession, deceit and jealousy.

The friendly competition of Victorian magicians Lord Caldlow and Alfred Borden (Bale) evolves into a bitter rivalry, making them brave enemies for life and jeopardizing the lives of everyone around them.

Johansson plays Olivia, the mysterious woman who is Angier's assistant before she becomes Borden's.

The movie opens on Oct. 25.

Chinese cinema docu

The National Geographic Channel premiere "China Hollywood," a documentary of China's secret of success in the film industry.

Zhang Ziyi, Zhang Yimou, Gong Li, all well-known names behind the rise of China Hollywood.

The documentary unveils the secrets behind the phenomenal boom in Chinese movies on Oct. 28 at 9 p.m.

Game show's new home

"Show-nuno Pa-mayo sa Buhay," the daily TV game show of Pinoys in thrills, has a new home in ABC-5.

The show is to relive to encourage viewers to make it a habit to ask for a receipt when they purchase goods or services and send in their official receipt details daily.

Contestants are chosen every week and each of the four daily contestants will have the chance to make up to P1 million.

The program airs daily at 11 p.m., with Teresa Garcia as host and Joel Torre and Al Tantiongco as celebrity guest.

SCARLETT JOHANSSON with Hugh Jackman in "The Prestige"

ARANETA CENTER

Gateway MALL | SmallPlaza

CINEMA 10

TXT | THE BANQUET | WORLD TRADE CENTER | TILL I MET YOU
EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH | THE DEPARTED | TILL I MET YOU
MY FIRST WEDDING | THE DEPARTED | THE GUARDIAN | WORLD TRADE CENTER
MARKED

MALL 5

1 TXT | TILL I MET YOU | WORLD TRADE CENTER
2 MARKED | THE BANQUET

For ticket inquiries, please call TicketNet at 911 5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph

ARANETA COLISEUM

2006-2007 PBA PHILIPPINE CUP | BEE GEES GREATEST HITS LIVE !

glorietta | GREENBELT | TOWN | AYALA CENTER CEBU | MARKET! MARKET! | Ayala Malls Manila Bay

AT THE CINEMAS

G1	1 THE BANQUET	2 TXT	3 WORLD TRADE CENTER	4 TILL I MET YOU
G4	1 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	3 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	
	4 SPEED STREET SCHEDULE	5 THE BANQUET	6 WORLD TRADE CENTER	7 TILL I MET YOU
GB1	1 THE BANQUET	2 WORLD TRADE CENTER		
GB3	1 THE DEPARTED	2 WORLD TRADE CENTER		
	3 THE GUARDIAN	4 EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH	5 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	
ATC	1 WORLD TRADE CENTER	2 THE GUARDIAN		
	3 THE EYES OF THE MONTH	4 THE BANQUET	5 THE DEPARTED	
ACC	1 THE GUARDIAN	2 TILL I MET YOU	3 FLYBOYS	4 THE DEPARTED
M2	1 TXT	2 WORLD TRADE CENTER		
	3 THE BANQUET	4 TILL I MET YOU	5 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	

At the Activity Center

GLORIETTA	TOWN
Bosses' Passes by Watch: The Ultimate Global Model Search	Automatic Center Exhibit
AYALA CENTER CEBU	MARKET! MARKET!
Mixed Martial Arts Federation	Lagoon Plaza

Greenbelt | Lounge Nights at Greenbelt 2

Cinemalaya | Repertory Philippines presents Wet Grocery's ALABOK at REP's Onion Theater

Ayala Museum | 19th - 20th Century Philippine Art from Ayala Museum Collection

AT 15, SHE BECAME A BRIDE
AT 19, SHE BECAME QUEEN
BY 30, SHE WAS... A LEGEND
KIRSTEN DUNST
MARIE ANTOINETTE
Written & Directed by Sofia Coppola
Know her... Love her... Hate her
coming soon only at
AYALA MALLS CINEMAS

It's Brain vs. Brain in the coolest whiz game to hit town! Timezone's
Super Trivia
Now Available at Glorietta 2, Greenbelt 3 and soon at Alabang Town Center
TIMEZONE
"Time to Play!"